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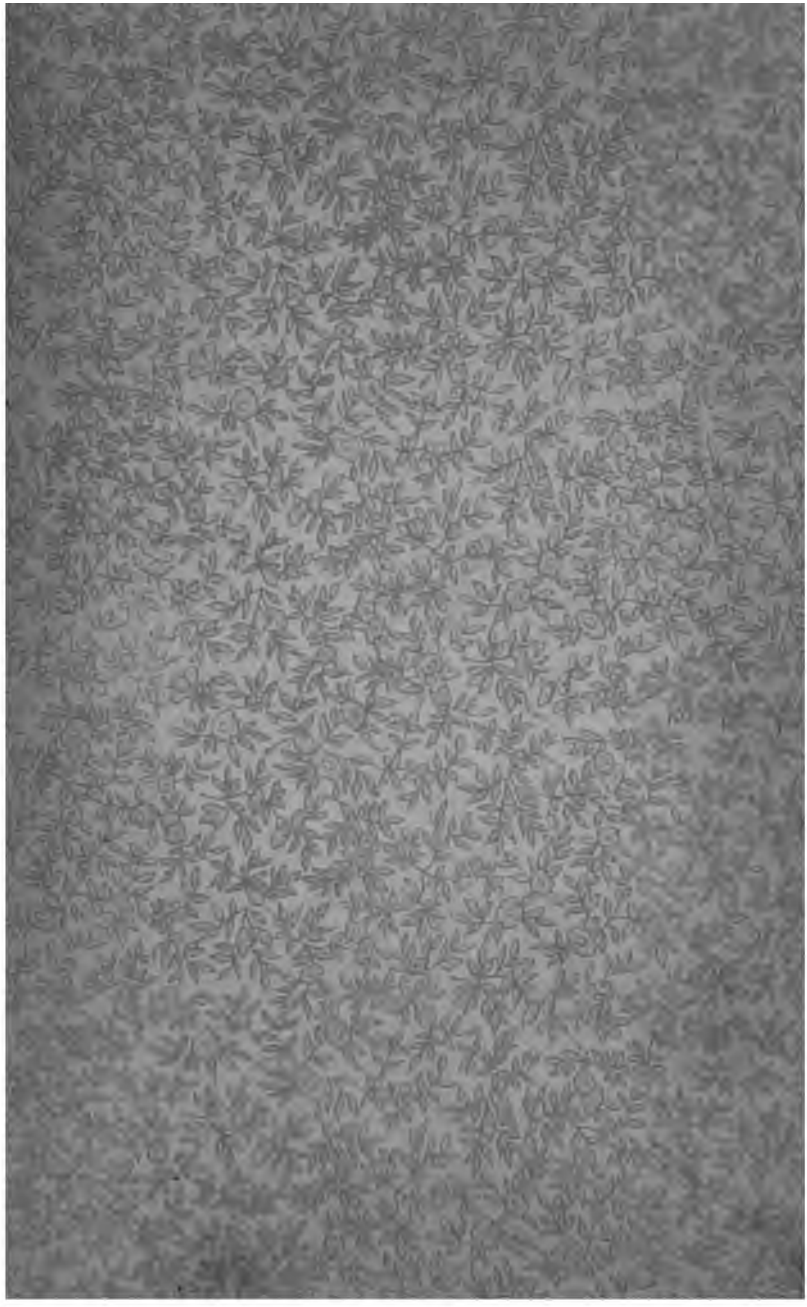
Mystic Voices

S. L. MERSHON

An
Interpretation
of
Nature



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MYSTIC VOICES

AN INTERPRETATION OF NATURE

PART I

Terrestrial Phones

or

Voices from the Visible

PART II

Celestial Phones

or

Voices from the Invisible

BY

S. L. MERSHON

THEO. E. SCHULTE

132 East 23d Street, New York

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TO THE MEMORY OF

THAT FAITHFUL AND GODLY

LONG ISLAND PASTOR

Formerly of Easthampton, N. Y.

REV. STEPHEN L. MERSHON

By his son

Stephen L. Mershon

With illustrations by

his grandson

Stephen L. Mershon, 3rd.

CONTENTS.

PART I

	PAGE
RECOGNITION	5
NATURE'S CALL	6
GRANDFATHER'S FARM	7
THE INHERITANCE OF GRANDFATHER'S FARM	11
UNDER GRANDFATHER'S ROOF	15
BEAUTY AND LIFE ON GRANDFATHER'S FARM	21
BY THE BROOK ON GRANDFATHER'S FARM	32
DRIFTING SEAWARD	37
LOVE ON GRANDFATHER'S FARM	41
THE STORM	49
THE VILLAGE CHURCH	54
THE CHARM OF A SACRED SABBATH ON GRANDFATHER'S FARM	59
THE TEMPLE IN GRANDFATHER'S WOODS	64
RESURRECTION VOICES ON GRANDFATHER'S FARM	70
BACKWARD HO!	77

RECOGNITION.

INTRODUCING my loved Father-in-Law and my beloved Mother-in-Law, Mr. and Mrs. John Hawkins, our children's "Grandfather and Grandmother, of Grandfather's Farm," from whose lips I have never heard an unkind word, and whose daily life is a constant witness for the Lord Jesus Christ. Wife, children and I send this greeting of love to them.

THE AUTHOR.

MONTCLAIR, N. J.

NATURE'S CALL.

SEEK Him that maketh the seven stars and Orion and turneth the shadow of death into the morning and maketh the day dark with night; that calleth for the waters of the sea and poureth them out upon the face of the earth.—THE LORD is His name (Amos 5:8).

But ask now the beasts and they shall teach thee; and the fowls of the air and they shall tell thee (Job 12:7).

He giveth to the beast his food, and to the young ravens which cry (Psa. 147:9).

The heavens declare His righteousness and all the people see His glory (Psa. 97:6).

The floods have lifted up, O Lord, the floods have lifted up their voice (Psa. 93:3).

The Lord on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea (Psa. 93:4).

Praise ye Him, sun and moon; praise ye Him, all ye stars of light (Psa. 148:2).

Let them praise the name of the Lord, for He commanded and they were created (Psa. 148:5).

Then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice before the Lord (Psa. 96:12-13).

Ye shall go forth with joy and shall be led forth with peace, and all the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands (Isa. 55:12).

GRANDFATHER'S FARM.

"This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord."—Isa. 54:17.

I AM a Long Islander by birth; consequently I have a loyal interest in its welfare, as well as a long acquaintance with its varied natural attractions.

It has been our happy experience to spend almost every summer for many years on Forge River, tributary to Moriches Bay.

A more charming spot can not be found on Long Island. We have discovered here a marvelous wealth of natural attractions, in the beautiful flowers, graceful ferns and majestic forests in their wildest charms.

These timbered lands, open fields and fragrant meadows are inhabited by a vast population of birds with wondrous beauty and sweetest song.

The waters of the river, bays, brooks and coves seem alive with every variety of fresh and salt water fish abounding in this latitude.

The clear, crisp nights, so frequent on this part of the island, reveal a vision of the Starry World above our heads which, combined with Nature's bewildering splendors so lavishly displayed about us, causes the true student of Nature to exclaim: "The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth His handiwork."

Many go to the country, utterly oblivious to the beauties of the field, to kill the birds that are the soul and voice of the meadows, or, forgetting the woods, crowd into fashionable hotels for social gayeties, when a world of nature all about endowed with a benediction of Divine Glory calls to a bright, beautiful and joyous companionship.

THE APPROACH TO GRANDFATHER S FARM.

In this God's workshop, where the Divine Creator paints the flowers, endows the trees with strength and beauty and exalts all Nature in lofty praise, we find—Grandfather's Farm.

The large, old Colonial house, for over one hundred and fifty years, has stood "with latchstring

out" to all and a royal welcome of sincere Christian hospitality.

About the old hearthstone, laid by Pilgrim hands, we have heard strange stories of the days of long ago.

Are we children of Nature? Then a walk through Grandfather's woods and a look at Grandmother's flowers will fill our hearts with joy and our lips with songs.

We will find that we are but babes in these woods, where tower aloft trees that have here stood on guard in the light of three centuries.

Are we philosophers? Then the mystery of blossoms and fruits will there fill us with wonder and deep contemplation.

Is there poetry in our nature? Then the inspiration of forest and fen will find voice within and expression without.

Are we sons of God? Then all Nature there displayed will tell of His glory and speak in His praise. Nature is the enshrinement of Divine love!

Near to Grandfather's gateway stands a grand old pear tree, with storm-beaten trunk and mossy limbs. This venerable and beloved old tree, for over a century, has borne its annual burden of luscious pears, as its contribution to the delights of this Colonial estate.

In the midst of this joyous scene, we stop a moment to pay tribute at the little Colonial burying-ground, forest-guarded, star-watched, moss-covered, at peace—while the breath of the winds through the tree tops gives forth Nature's divinely attuned

requiem and the music of the birds makes here their sweet ministry of song.

Grandfather's Farm, what shall we call it? God's Cathedral, because of its over-arching forest, cloistered shrubberies and bird choruses? God's Celestial City, because of its river of life? Or God's Bethany, for, like Bethany of old, there is a house in its midst in which the Master loves to dwell. Or shall we call it God's storehouse? for from its meadows and fields bursts forth the golden grain, and also spring to life the finest and best vegetables and table fruits. In fact, it is "a land of milk and honey" plus many good things!

The river flows to it, the ocean tide rolls to it, the birds fly to it, the crops come to it, the grandchildren run to it, for they all love it, because *it is Grandfather's Farm.*

THE INHERITANCE OF GRANDFATHER'S FARM.

"I will pour my spirit upon thy seed and my blessing upon thine offspring."—Isa. 44:3.

GREAT-GRANDFATHER HAWKINS was a man of heroic frame, rugged character and sturdy worth. The proprietor of a vast estate, he stood in his community for sterling integrity, indomitable energy and Puri-

GRANDFATHER'S TROUT POND.

tan faith, just as Great-grandmother Hawkins revealed in her beautiful Christian life all that was best and sweetest in her noble Virginia lineage.

In the flood-tide hour of his well-earned success, Great-grandfather Hawkins "was not, for God took him."

A strange hush seemed all-pervasive that day.

The trees whispered, the brooks murmured, while bleating sheep and lowing herds seemed to give a new interpretation to life under the shadows of death on the old farm.

In this crisis hour Grandfather Hawkins moved out into the open and became the new master of the Colonial homestead.

Great-grandfather Hawkins took not one acre of land with him.

The huge granaries still held their overflowing stores of corn and wheat, while not a piece of family plate or a dollar from the savings of a lifetime accompanied this solitary traveler on his new and silent voyage.

No trunks were hurriedly packed, no little knick-nacks were tucked by loving hands into a waiting valise for use on this journey.

The pilgrim calmly and quietly slipped away, that day, taking with him only, but all sufficiently, a Christian character and an abiding faith, which in sturdiness resembled his beloved oak tree, which in fidelity to truth was like the North Star, by which every surveyed line on his landed estate was run. A character which in radiance of worth revealed a light like unto the dawn of the mornings, as through the years they had met him in the early hours when the opening days had called him to duty on the old farm.

And so another life vanished out of sight; as a

light fades away, or as music dies out, or as aromas become insensate, so this life was, and then was not visible.

Grandfather, that day, felt a strange weight of a new responsibility. He saw wonderful soils, prepared by Almighty God to bring forth great supplies of food, and God and these soils were now waiting for him.

He beheld vast crops divinely called into life and bountifulness from his father's sowings, now waiting for his sickle.

He saw mute and faithful cattle and noble horses, zealously filling out their God-intended mission in life, but looking to him for food, shelter and proper care.

He saw a place vacant in the counsels of the community and an empty chair in the old home.

He knew that the light had gone out in his mother's life by this sad parting of the twain, and that from him must flow the balm of filial love and tender care.

So grandfather became the high priest at the family altar, the custodian of a great and holy trust, the heir of sacred responsibilities and the loving son on whom a widowed mother leaned until her garments of mourning were exchanged for celestial raiments and her sad memories were forgotten amidst angelic welcomes and loving reunions in the palaces of the King.

From that day to this God's benediction has rested upon the old Colonial home, for was not its title reverently received as a gift from God in the form

of a legacy from a noble Christian father? Angels from the Choirs Celestial in the City of God, when moving out on their earthly missions and hovering for a time over the old farm, have seen its fields and forests lifting up their glories to the praise of the Most High; have heard affectionate and reverent words ascending from the family altar, and have witnessed gifts going forth to the poor and needy.

It has been said that moving bodies pursue their way along lines of least resistance, and if angels on their joyous errands of mercy move along highways where love and holy living make heavenly atmospheres for them, what tides of glorified life flow silently in, out and about grandfather's farm.

As Scotia's highlands filtrate their robustness into the rugged Scottish character, and as the sublime Alpine scenery and glorious Mediterranean sunsets gave birth to Italian art, and as Nature's mystic harmonies burst forth in symphonies and oratorios, so the soul of man, chaliced in clay, feels the sublime pulsations of Divine energy in Nature. He with horoscopic outlook has soul visions in realms where one speck of matter would make friction and where pure love in sweet and holy effusion is discovered to be the life of God.

It is well, then, to "bide a wee" on grandfather's farm, the trysting-place of two worlds, and think.

UNDER GRANDFATHER'S ROOF.

"He blesseth the habitation of the just."—Prov. 3:33.

SOMEHOW Father Time let down his great lantern below the bars of the western horizon, and the shadows of night enshrouded us. The evening meal was over, and, going to an old cupboard, I found an old leather-bound volume lying by the side of an ancient pewter candlestick. It had written within its covers this strange statement: "He maketh the day dark with night." And so, opening wide the window high up in the peak of the ancestral home, I took my outlook into the dark and starry night, and gave wings to thought. What visions of the past were beneath me! Down the quaint stairway there glowed the dying embers in the great old fireplace, the crude masonry of which testified in its mute and eloquent way that Colonial love was indeed large, and that sturdy arms and rugged hearts, now long since gone, had hewed the timber and drawn the heavy logs of wood, that loved dames might keep the fires burning on the hearthstone, and little children playing on the floor might sing happy songs on bleak winter nights, and read their text-books by the glow of the firelight.

The massive brick oven built in this same chimney, speaks most eloquently to me of a Puritan art, now lost. As I loitered by the window I heard the steady tick, tick of the old wooden-wheel, leaden-weighted

clock. This heirloom, as a recording angel, has under this same roof ticked the birth-hour of generation after generation, and has also in the hush of angelic visitations struck the hour and ticked the minutes of many a soul's departure from this house into the larger life.

Dear old clock! It is my solitary companion to-night, speaking to me of the fact that our lives are being measured off with the certainty and continuity of the passing days, and that I am but one of a great multitude of pilgrims moving on and on, for a brief moment visible here, and then gone. Many have come and passed. The early settler, the groom, the bride, the little children, the old man, the aged partner of his joys and sorrows, trooping in and then trooping out. Here then—vanished now. Singly they came and one by one they passed on, the group of one generation gradually fading away as another generation came, moving in to till the soil, to keep the fires burning and to reap the fruits of others' planting, and then, leaving the heritage of a good name, they also moved out and up beyond our ken. Always coming, always going, never staying long, what joys and sorrows, what hopes and disappointments have swept in and have glided away from beneath this old Colonial roof.

Through all these intensely tragic changes that faithful old clock has ticked on, and that grand old Bible has lovingly spoken to each passing pilgrim the word of counsel in the time of action, the word of warning in the face of eternity, the word of sympathy in the hour of sorrow, and the word of Divine

Assurance when some old chair was left vacant and when the birds sang over some new-made mound in the sacred old burial-plot. And so to-night, when grandfather wound the old clock and then sat down by the old fireplace, and opened that old book, and read the old, old story, and then when grandfather and grandmother knelt on the old floor and prayed to

THE OLD HOMESTEAD.

our God and to the God of our Fathers, methought that God and the angels would miss the fires of devotion if they should go out from beneath this roof after all these generations of communion with the Father in heaven, and so we fervently prayed to-night for His blessing upon the children and the children's children to all generations until He comes.

What troops of sacred and holy thoughts traversed the mind that night in the solemn, quiet hour as, looking out in the dim light, I caught the outlines of the old farm, the winding solitary Indian trail, a misty vision of the silent little Colonial burial-place, and as holy memories flooded in upon me. Reluctantly, but with unwonted calm, I turned to my couch, and, throwing back the spread, I saw woven into the fabric the initials of a great-grandmother, who wove it; and these beautiful homespun blankets were left by another motherly ancestor, who made yonder demure and now melancholy spinning-wheel sing, as in olden times it spun for her the thread, and who also companioned with yonder garret-exiled loom, as for her it wove the fabric for the coverlets of her loved ones, and their children yet to come.

Did I sleep that night, under the weird charms of such unique environment? Did I dream sweet dreams, love-ladened with mental photographs of joys celestial, or did I have a real soul vision, not of beautiful things, but of heavenly thoughts; not of sweet faces, but of glorified spirits; and was I for a brief time carried into realms supernal? One thing I know; the loves of two worlds blended together that night in soul visions, and whether awake or asleep I know not, but being alive with wide open soul vision, great crystal tides of love from the sacred fonts of heavenly joys were outpoured about me. Therein were mirrored vanished lives which seemed to be music, beauty to look upon, radiant with celestial glory. And so I dreamed of or saw opening gates of pearl emitting waves of light, the rhythmic

THE OLD SPINNING-WHEEL.

flow of which was like the soul music of Paradise, every note as if from seraphic lips. Suddenly I was aroused, being called by the notes of the morning lark and the song of the robin greeting the rising sun.

BEAUTY AND LIFE ON GRANDFATHER'S FARM.

"Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin, and yet, I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these."—Matt. 6:28, 29.

HE WHO moves out from the mystery of midnight and its panoramic host of marshaled stars into the full-orbed light of day, on grandfather's farm, should have multi-eyes to witness a vast population inhabiting forest, field and meadow; should be keen-eared to hear the hum and rush of beehive, bird and ant-heap cities; and with acute perceptions should be touched by the ever-moving tides of industry, love and hope, rampant in the air, honeycombing the ground and navigating the sea.

He should note the governments of force, the governments of law and the governments of love in full sway, dominating the lower orders of animate creation.

He should have the soul of the artist, for from neutral colors and soft, retiring backgrounds great sentry trees stand in the approach; or groups of uplifted green, in gay or sombre garb, foreshadow a vista of receding meadows, where herds pasture in sweet content; or else by change of outlook long lanes, with gnarled and knotty trees of sturdy frame,

give support to trailing vines, which in generous return hold forth great clusters of wild vintage or flowers of strange and bewildering fragrance.

Glens, gurgling brooks and harvest fields o'erhung by soft blue skies and floating clouds of gray, bid us note the ravishing charms of nooks, falling waters, shaded pools, the quiet restfulness of the distant farmhouse and the farm-hands wending home their weary way. The Divine Artist hath here His studio, the walls of which portray the color scheme of heaven. The floors of this studio are mosaic of inimitable browns, moulded by the ceramic power of volcanic action, carved and sculptured by moving glaciers and the onsweeping cloudburst. We walk on verdant rugs, each pattern original, with no duplicate, and woven from a Divine conception, wrought out and colored by the Great Artist, alone or in fellowship with His human children. Each design constantly grows and changes from the stroke of the Orient to the knell of the Occident, and through the conserving hours of the night-time.

Dost thou know this Divine Artist? Dost thou desire to see Him? The secret of His appearance is in the trees, in the meadows, in the sunlight, and in the Celestial Guidebook, the latter saying: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

Enter grandfather's gateway only with a wide open, a pure and reverent vision, and lo, thou wilt behold and see how great trees and climbing vines have, at His call, as it were, brought up from mines below and decorated their leaves and flowers with wondrous rays from flashing gems and gleaming jewels, while

down the wickerwork of interlacing sunbeams His love hath poured from above a radiance like unto the glories of the Revelation walls of St. John's Celestial City, and its opening gates of pearl. Thus here, in lights and in shadows, in crystal clearness and in veiling mists, the splendors of the World Celestial,

A SENTRY TREE.

the glories of the World Terrestrial, in color harmonies and in complementary colors, complete a vision of the Mind of God in art. In it the pure in heart see God!

Putting my spade into the ground, I found the lowly, wriggling angleworm, burrowing and crawling through dark, earthy tunnels that soils might be

loosened up to air and water; also making paths for the slender and delicate rootlets, all done that great harvests might be lifted up to the glory of God, and for the happiness of the children of men.

Thus I found that in the economy of Nature God hath use for the angleworm and it worketh in harmony with Him.

I dare not stop the flight of yonder bee, for it would sting if I did, for, lo! it is hurrying on its God-sent mission, not only to gather honey sweets for His children, but in carrying the pollen from blossom to blossom that luscious fruits may hang pendant from boughs ladened rich with the blessing of God.

Thus I found that in the economy of Nature God hath use for the bee and it worketh in harmony with Him.

I beheld birds, while devouring destructive insects, were also ravishing grandfather's blackberry and strawberry patches, unmolested by that dear old man. Winging their way to treetop and hedgerow, they dropped a part of their fruit feast that warbling throats might sing back their happy songs of thanks to God and grandfather for such bounty; and, behold, the falling fruits took root from their seedlets, and the wildwood gave birth to multitudes of delicious berries.

Thus I found that in the economy of Nature God hath use for the birds, and they work in harmony with Him.

Can it be that God, who rejoiceth to labor with angleworm, bee and bird, has no desire and plan to work with even the most lowly and humble of men,

exalted far above animal life, yea created in the image of God? Here I read in the Book of Nature that God hath use for every man who will work in harmony with Him.

Oh! obscure child of man, be not thou disheartened, but get thou in line with God.

Methinks that the lowly bobolink of the meadows

A BATHING PLACE.

and the thrush in the dark shade of the pine tree glean sweeter and more tender joys than does the boisterous eagle on rugged crag and lofty mountain peak. And so Nature teaches me that the tiny flower, the little bird and the childlike heart of man, share in the bountiful love from the great, overflowing heart of the Father—God.

Art thou a chemist? Hast thou the legend of life's mystery on grandfather's farm? Tell thou us

by what formulæ or processes the dust of the road, the lime of the seashell, the iron of the hillside and the gurgling waters of the springlet, combining together, become the bodies containing that mystic something called life! A body pulsating with the love of fatherhood, motherhood, faith in God and hope of immortality.

Tell us, thou student of alchemy, by what method the silicon, the carbon and other elements of the mineral kingdom, at the call of a germ of life in the seedlet, pass into and become the trunk, the branch, the blossom and the fruit of the vegetable kingdom? Again, thou wizard of science, tell us how, at the call of human life, these same transformed elements recombine and become a part and portion of flesh and blood?

What mysteries run riot in life on grandfather's farm!

Behold yonder oak. The acorn fell to the ground. 'Tis said 'twas charged with life. Science found in it only earthy matter, and yet earthy matter took root. Life needed light, and from the acorn a little hand went up through earth and mosses to reach the sunbeams, and, throwing out its fingers of leaves, it caught the rays of sunlight. Why up? Why always up after sunbeams? Oh, thou professor of mathematics, in the realm of chance how many chances are there for the sprout to grow up. And yet acorns always sprout upward to reach the sunlight. Life needed food, and then the rootlets went downward from this same acorn. Why down? And so life's appeal to heaven and earth wrought out a forest

giant. How? I put my ear to the tree. I heard no sound. I spoke to it and there came back no answer. So tell me, thou scientist, somewhat of the mystery of the tree. How does it hunt and go after its own food? Lo! yonder tree sends forth its roots, which, in catlike silence, hunt its provisions. Thus

ON THE BAY.

they find their way in the earth to rich deposits of nourishment, that they may, in squirrel fashion, carry stores of strength to the forest king. Who gave them the power of selection, and the tendency to extend toward rich deposits of food? Who gave this same tree the power and discernment to accumulate between its fibres rich stores of surplus nutriment,

in the time of its most luxuriant growth, so that it might draw therefrom its nourishment when age and privation beset it?

By what mysterious process can the rootlets of the oak tree, when entangled in the earth with the roots of the pine tree and feeding together upon the same elements, always build oak, while the pine roots in like manner, when fed at the same table, create and rear the pine, while laughing flowers at their feet catch up the same soil and win therefrom their bloom and fragrance?

Who set the bounds of their natures, and who endows these trees with the power to hunt their forage, select and adapt the same, and then enables them to carry up with such marvelous accuracy the exact proportions for the proper development of trunk, limbs and leaflets?

Hast thou discerned the beauty of the inner life on grandfather's farm?

The grape vine, how dark, dull and homely, but from its secret inner life, born of God, what luscious vintage and rivers of life burst forth!

As if to teach a stronger lesson, out from the thorn bush, homely and at first repellant, great raspberries and blackberries come, while from grandma's thorn-crowned cacti the heaven-emblazoned blossoms unfold.

It would also seem as if all trees and plants seek immortality, for, unlike animals and humans, they, uninfluenced by passions or pleasures, seek progeny. With what care the oaks fashion the developing acorns, and, charging them with the precious germs

of life, they encase them for protection and then cast them forth, that oak-life may glorify the forests of God in ages after the parent tree has crumbled in the mold of the underbrush.

On grandfather's beach land we find the rough, coarse and homely beach grass, a division of the Salvation Army of the vegetable world.

These often despised grasses seek the dry, hot sands of the summer and the wind-swept dunes of the winter. Poorly nourished, their worldly prospects for luxuriant growth are blighted. They are in a class by themselves. Away from the sanctuary of the woods, they join not the beauty and show of rich soils and love-protected gardens, but by choice they battle out their desert lives, that they may hold the great sea back and keep the wind-drifting sands in place that other grasses and flowers may grow to surpassing beauty and that other fields and gardens may be saved to a wealth of flowers and fruits from which they themselves are forever shut out—steadfast martyrs to the vagrant sands.

Pilgrim, as thou dost walk the ocean sand-banks, uncover thy head and thank thy God for the beach grass of the sand dunes.

Oh, the mysteries of life on grandfather's farm! We leave the interpretation with any thoughtful builder, who knows that back of each structure there must be an architect and builder, and that back of all plans there must be a mind. Oh, thou chemist, thou architect, thou builder! enter thou upon grandfather's farm with uncovered heads and reverent hearts, for the world's builder is now building there!

The Divine Chemist is always in the laboratory of Nature. The Supreme Architect there draws His plans in the fashion of the leaf and in the germ of the seed, while each day witnesses the perpetual building up of the temple of Nature. God is manifested in all His works.

THE BROOK.

BY THE BROOK ON GRANDFATHER'S FARM.

"He cutteth out the rivers among the rocks, and His eye seeth every good thing."—Job 28:10.

To BE alone with God under the open sky and resting on the bosom of Mother Earth—it is the sunrise hour of the Soul.

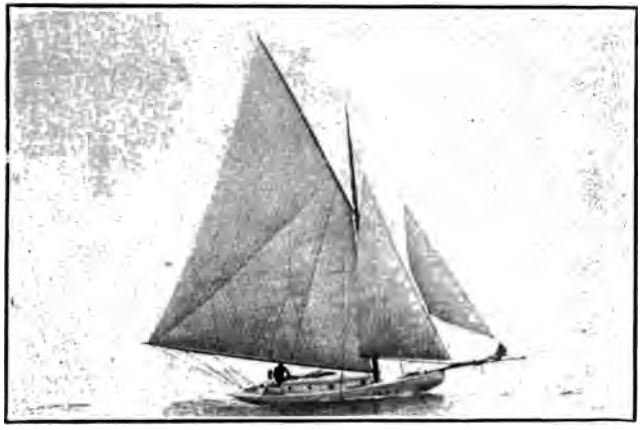
To be alone with God in the temple of Nature, with its forest processionals, bird choruses and variegated lights streaming in through heavenward windows of waving leaves and swaying branches—it's the vesper hour of the Soul.

As advancing rays of the setting sun strike the bells of closing day, and as sunlit camp-fires against the western horizon hold back the billows of night, when the lamps in overhead skies are being lighted, and as weary birds fly home to comforting mates, all prophetic of rest and peace, so weary, tired man, nerve-racked, brain-fagged, with mind begrimed and soul thirsty, finds sweet solace on the bosom of Mother Earth.

Strange affinities! The babe, with outstretched hands and longing cry, seeks the maternal arms. Is it materialistic affinity, flesh for flesh, or bone for bone; or is it a deeper voice of Nature, in reciprocity of love? Mystic harmonies!

We lay ourselves on the lap of Mother Earth. What

surcease of tension, what great and holy rest o'ertakes us! Perchance we come with tears, but sweet calm follows. Sleep may there for a time palsy us, but our eyes there open to the deep and holy things of God, for are not the foundations of His eternal hills beneath us and has He not spread over us the canopy of His universe?



OFF TO THE YACHT RACE.

On the bosom of Mother Earth! Do the materialistic elements in our physical structure simply cry out through nerve-ache and weary brain for reunion with former physical mates in the earthy mass beneath us; or does the spirit of man cry out to the All Present Mind in Nature for a deep and abiding peace? Thus the homing instinct calls us here.

Our throbbing heart, resting on the mosses, finds its doors and windows opening. From the silent world beneath us voices are speaking, silent forms seem to

glide into the sacred temple of the soul, while strange lights from the dark world beneath illuminate the mind. A birdlet on near-by swinging grasses hears no voice, while no additional waves of solar light add color to the surrounding day, and yet a darkened soul-house has been here suddenly emptied of black despair, while radiant joy and illuminating faith have hand in hand made merry in the tabernacle of the heart, for Mother Earth hath by love tokens called this her tired boy, and her tired boy hath listened. Methinks that voice hath the cadence of the stars, the perfume of the flowerlets, the throbbing of the brooklets, the all-persuasiveness of the all-pervading Father.

The Earth Mother said to me: "My boy, will you, for a time, cease your greedy rush after my gold and take time to listen to me about my greater treasures? Rest here and listen.

"Yonder maiden plucking the flowers from my bosom loves the gift. Does she remember the giver, who, through winter and summer, storm and sunshine, has been building up and feeding this waving outburst of glory to crown her brow?

"Yonder giant oak, now spreading its gladiatorial limbs in athletic sports with every storm, may forget the mother who bore it, the one who nursed and feeds it, and the one to whom it commits its life forces when winter blights it. Perchance the storm, angered by the roughness of this giant's resistance, smites it with the blast of its lightning, and wounded and bleeding it falls to be caught and held on my bosom. It was born of me, it took its strength from me, and,

grievously smitten by the storm-bolt or by passing years, it will surely come back to me. Mother first, mother all through life; mother at the last, the lips of the leaflets will tell you the story of the Earth Mother love.

"Rest here and listen. As but of yesterday you brought to me the form of your loved sister, that wondrous lover of Nature—she who distilled sweet messages from the grasses, holy promises from the flowers and Divine companionship from the stars and trees. She loved me, and loved my children, so much that when you brought her to me I opened my arms, receiving her body, ashes to ashes, dust to dust. Only God can summon from that holy sleep.

"I covered her grave with the grasses, I crowned her burial-place with the mosses, I bejewelled her bed with flowers painted by the Divine Artist, and I will keep her who is death-touched until she is God-called; then I will give her up to Him.

"I am the resting-place to whom all the human family will come to await the angels' call, and I am sure that every growing tree and every flying bird will come to me, and entering in, I will hold them in silence for a time until a bright and glorious morning, when the gates of glory will open and the angels will come forth with a resurrection call, and then my doors will open and the Redeemed of the Lord will go forth from me. It will be the gala day of the Universe, the marriage supper of the Lamb, and your loved ones will be there.

"In the meantime, every hour I am feeding the hungry, giving water to the thirsty, while innumer-

able multitudes of tiny insects make their happy homes with me."

And so the Mother Earth talked to me, and I learned that she too was a part of God's great plan for the glory gathering of that host which no man can number.

Thus I saw that this was only a part of His plan, for "His paths are in the sea." So, taking a boat, I drifted down Forge River until I heard the waves playing among the sands on the shore, and I said: "This night I will also look for Him in the sea."

DRIFTING SEAWARD.

"Thy way, O God, is in the sea and Thy path in the great waters."—Psa. 77:19.

"The sea is His and He made it."—Psa. 95:5.

IT WAS ebb-tide, at the twilight hour, and the ocean breezes, having fulfilled their blessed mission on land, had veered about and were slowly taking their homeward flight seaward. They seemed reluctant to leave the swaying blossoms, golden chaliced water lilies and meadow distillations, and yet they were seeking their home on the ocean bosom and their rest beyond the bar. This night they joined the outbound tides in the bay, and together they moved silently and calmly towards the Atlantic.

My boat was borne on the bosom of the bay tide, and my throbbing pulses were baptized in breezes charged with the hypnotism of the sea, as they bore on their wings the combined and harmonizing aromas of forest and glen. So I drifted in the hush of the evening hour. The quietude deepened as the land receded. The old farm gradually melted away, and the tapestry of the evening mists arose about me, like the whitened robes of myriad guardian angels, ascending until they met the falling curtains of the descending night, in which they seemed to hang their lighted evening lamps, and then to vanish into the heavens beyond.

And so alone I drifted, under the light of God's stars, on the waters of Moriches Bay, breathing the Divine atmosphere of the seas and feeling the deep throb of a rhythmic flood. Yet I was not alone when thus drifting, for, being star-watched, I was God-watched; being tide-borne, I was God-lifted; being landlocked, I was God-kept. Scanning the circle of

THE RIVER BANK.

night about me, I beheld the glimmer of a light, placed by an aged hand in the window of the old farm-house, and then I knew that I was at the meeting-place of two great tides—the tide of God's love, reaching down, and the tide of human love, reaching out. It was a sacred place, rich in holy quiet, where the true child of God with perfect faith can walk with Him on the sea.

THE LIFE-SAVING CREW.

To break such silence seemed almost profanation, and yet I knew that but one signal of distress would bring instantly to my relief that heroic band of life-savers who, in yonder life-saving station, wrapped now in the shrouds of night, keep eternal vigil at an altar of duty to which they stand pledged to hazard life, if needs be, for the helpless. Methinks the Master's eye follows them in their silent nightly patrols and remembers His own solitary vigils on the shores of Galilee's Sea, when He too was out on His patrol to save the lost. "His head was filled with dew and His locks with the drops of the night." I knew that there was one, and, I believe, many more, watching me from the starry heights above. I knew that some one perchance was swinging a great spy-glass, in the tower of yonder life-saving station, scanning the waters to see that all was well, and then I beheld, in dim outline, the semblance of a human form swinging a lantern on the shore, and I knew that grandfather had come down to the dock and was looking for me. All this told me that so long as God lives, angels watch and human hearts beat, we are environed and enveloped in love; and so, rowing towards the love on shore, I got no nearer to it than I was, and God's great love kept pace with me, so that when I tied my boat at the dock I was no further away from His care.

I had found the true "lover's lane." His paths are in the sea and I had met Him there.

LOVE ON GRANDFATHER'S FARM.

"How often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not."—Matt. 23:37.

HE WHO notes with cynicism the strut and crow of the cock in the barnyard should, with gentler thought, watch the brooding hen in her tender and heroic care of the gay and careless chicklets; she who, in their defense, with perfect abandon of mother love, will dash her body at the opening jaws of ravaging dogs or attacking foxes.

He who gazes with admiration upon the camp grounds of the yellow ant-heap should look within that citadel and view the object of their defenses, their nurseries, filled with baby ants, with doting attendants. How humanlike their guardianship, carrying forth these little ones to open air in sunny nooks and sheltered corners, when bright skies favor and winds are gentle, and back to their underground quarters when chilly breezes arise or overhanging clouds cut off the sunlight.

He who tells of the pirates of the air, that raiding hawk of the daylight and that prowling owl of the nighttime, let him behold the devotion of yonder mother bird, who, with maternal solicitude, builds her nest out as far as possible on the branches, where no murderous animal dare climb to seize her little

ones, and yet far enough in on the branches for strength to support them.

Behold her cover these her treasures when the wild, beating storm chills her and when great blasts of wind toss her to and fro amidst swaying branches and frightful enveloping darkness. What anxiety of love in the wild storm of night, as the faithful mother bird feels the throbbing hearts of her nestlings, snuggling close under her for safety. Sweet is the bird song at the dawn of the morning, when the wild watch is over.

Perchance to another home in the bird village great sorrow has come in the tempest. What tragedy there is in the treetops when, by some terrible storm blast, a birdling is missing from the nest. Didst thou ever hear the outcry of the father bird and the mother bird, fluttering and calling over the dead birdling? What love there is in the shrubbery, and what sweet and tender hearts we find in the grasses.

Hast thou, with stealth and caution, visited the abode of the birds in the rushes and noted the love and care of the parents, the faithful watching of the mother bird and the long flights of the father bird for food, that he may bring home a bit of grain, a wriggling worm or a luscious cherry?

Hast thou ever visited the bird village school and witnessed the patience, care and tenderness of the parent birds in teaching their little ones to fly, and also to hunt their provisions? Surely love reigns in the feathered parish.

But love also redeems! Under cover of grandfather's house a wild kitten found shelter. No rab-

bit fled faster, and no squirrel was more shy when first courted with kindness, but cautiously a little child voiced to it a winsome call, and the tempting plate of milk taught him that love was in waiting, and soon the little child had him in the arms of affection—a wild child of Nature, subdued by the love of a child of the Master.

GRANDMOTHER'S HYDRANGEAS.

Grandma's hydrangeas have year by year developed and bloomed with amazing glory, because grandmother loves them.

No fields owned by him who hates farming rejoice in the abundant harvests that crown the fields loved by grandfather.

In every flower and fruit God hath left room for improvement under the touch of human love and

effort. Thus He doth encourage and reward our co-operation with Him.

To that so-called philosopher who doubts the existence of a beneficent God in creation, and who comes to us with the strange query as to why sin is in the world to mar its beauty and to make sad discord in its harmony, we do but point in return to vegetation and ask him a question: Why these parasites to blast the life and sting the fruits?

Is Nature, therefore, malignant in her moods? Oh, thou agnostic, take thou thy pessimistic stand with these parasites in thy garden of weeds and find food for thy thought in malarial atmospheres, and, shutting out the sun by the fog of unbelief, with winged bats and hooting owls of the nighttime for thy music, give thyself over to darkness and to night. Permit me, a Christian optimist, to revel in the joys of the morning, the benedictions of the grasses, the twinkling lights of stellar worlds, the music of swaying trees and babbling brooks, with vegetations robed in garments of regal splendor, bedecked with singing birds and dancing sunbeams, and in them all to see the glorious gifts of God.

Thy blind, ground-mole existence in cold and sordid matter finds no fellowship with eagle flights, keen-eyed and swift-winged, into lofty atmospheres of blazing glory where God sitteth in the dome of the heavens!

Does thy heart-soil bring forth sorrel? It must therefore hold the acids of unbelief and selfishness. Put thou thereon the sweetening ashes of humility and faith, and the grasses and flowers of joy will spring

forth with praise to God and the soil of thy soul will be reclaimed.

Holding in my hand one single kernel of corn, I saw that it had in its very nature and structure an

NOONTIDE SHADES.

aspiration for a larger, a more useful and a multiplied life. So I planted that one grain of corn, and lo! there stands before me a stalk from which nature returns to me golden ears of corn wrapped in silken tassels and holding a thousand seed.

What royal generosity flows through the arteries of Nature!

In one moment of sympathy, I picked up a half-drowned, storm-driven birdlet, and, warming it into life, I again gave it its freedom. With but one thrill of joy, I turned aside and for a time forgot it. But lo! that bird, now with a nest in yonder branches, has sung for me a thousand songs, every one as sinless as the song of an angel of light and all expressive of the goodness of God.

How munificently repaid am I for one act of kindness.

Grandmother loved her flowers. Bending low over them, we found written all over them that God also loved these same flowers.

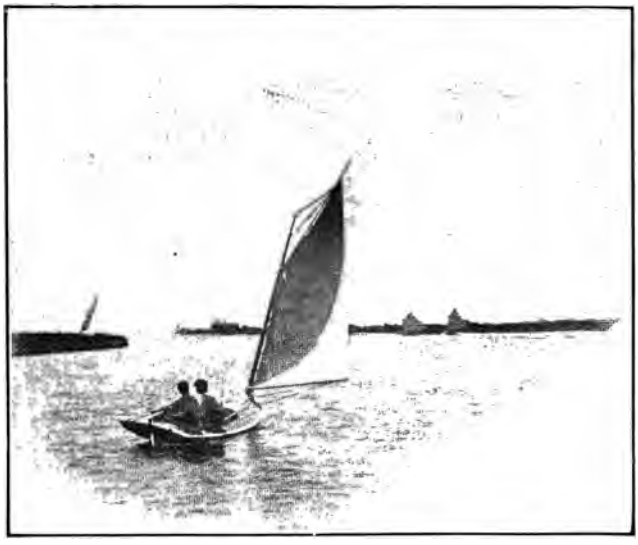
So grandmother and God together keep these flowers.

Into a darkened room, where sickness and despair held sway, a few of these stalks and blossoms found their way.

The sufferer knew that grandmother loved them, and so they spoke of human love, and then the sick one looked again and somehow a sweet vision appeared; these flowers seemed, as it were, to change into a beautiful mirror, in which was reflected God, the great and loving designer, angels, the messengers, human hearts, the carriers to one of His children for whom Christ died. The head was too tired then to even read the good old Book; the heart was too weary for the comforting words of friends; the nerves could not, as it were, endure even the footfall of loved ones; but these flowers, God's and grandmother's flowers,

brought quietude of heart, calmness of mind and renewed faith in a Heavenly Father's love, for they were divinely planned chalices, overflowing with the sweetness and bliss of two worlds' loves.

But here opens to us another great mystery. Love's



WE TWO. WOULDN'T YOU?

redemption on grandfather's farm is only through atonement. Interwoven in the woods, the vines, the harvest fields and the cattle is the weird but undeniable law of vicarious sacrifice. Grandmother must give much of her life to her flowers to redeem them to their fullest bloom and fragrance.

A lamb breaks from the sheepfold and grandfather must leave the crackling fire on the Colonial hearth-

stone and go out in the cold and thorn bush, following the lamb of the flock in bleak wind and darkness.

He who doubts the law of love's redemption through life's consecration and suffering should follow the farmer in ploughing and seed sowing, and then witness the joyous reward of ingathering.

Art thou a miner, and hast thou found in mountain and valley indications of gold in soil, sand and pebbles, and didst thou call it "drift" from a main vein? Didst thou follow on and discover more streaks of gold and traces of glittering ore in rocks that surrounded you, and didst thou say in calm assurance the "mother lode" must be near? So when we distill love from the dewdrop, find it again in feathered tribes and fur-coated creatures, we say these are drifts of heavenly ore, for love is the standard of value in the currency of heaven. When we go further and see among humans childlike fondness, fatherly love, with more holy maternal affection, then we too know that Divine love, the "mother lode," is very near.

The God of Love creates the lovely, and the love in us, for the lovely makes us love the most lovable, and God is love.

THE STORM.

"I will give you rain in due season."—Lev. 26:4.

NATURE, with feminine characteristics, hath her many and variable moods. With kaleidoscopic change, the calm quiet of the autumn eve was transformed into the swirls of the great equinoctial storm.

It seemed as if the gates of some Euroclydon had swung suddenly open and from "the cave of the winds" there had burst forth all the Furies of an atmospheric devastation; the Fury of the shipwreck, the Fury that fans the fire of forest conflagrations, the Fury that howls under the eaves in the night-time and, haunting the habitation of the hooting owl, moans and sighs in darkened forest and swaying treetops; now tearing a branch from some noble elm, then, catching unawares some belated and overburdened fruit tree, dashes it to the ground, with shriek and laughter.

Hath the Solar King of day and the Lunar Queen of the nighttime abdicated their thrones and surrendered their beneficent sway over all the earth? For lo! the heavens are inky black, with not even one ray of starlight, while under the rule and reign of violence the great sea, which hath so many days rolled its waves on shore with steady roar and boom, now towering up avalanches of water, hurls itself

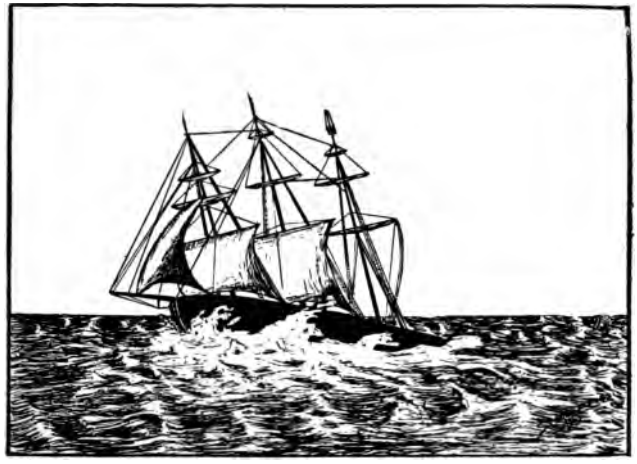
upon the yielding sands, like maddened cavalry, when stung by a thousand spurs, dashes in blinding fury upon a wavering foe.

As the torrents of rain for a moment falter, to give track to a lurid flash of zigzag or forked lightning, we peer out into the blackness of the night and watch the battle royal as the flying columns of the air attack the entrenched fortresses of the earth. It would seem as if a multitude of Black Spirits were tugging at every tree to dismember it; were twisting and straining at every rafter to unroof each dwelling; were cavorting about to seize upon and carry away all fences and arbors, while, veiled in darkness, no power could apprehend them.

It was a wild night! It hath been said that in the center of many great storms there is a calm; and so we found many calms in the wildness of this autumnal gale.

All was calm and peace in the old homestead, for had it not withstood the ragings of the winds well on for two centuries? The teakettle, singing on the hearth, and the kitten, purring at the fireplace, did but illustrate the quiet calm of the household, as the housewife, putting away the dishes of the evening meal, with trustful thought for her brother in command of an "ocean liner," sat down by the fireside. The calmness of quiet faith in the home! But we knew that this whole storm was environed by calm! Far above it, in resplendent glory, the sun reigned through the day, and later reflected his glory by the Queen of the Night, with her retinue of a million stars.

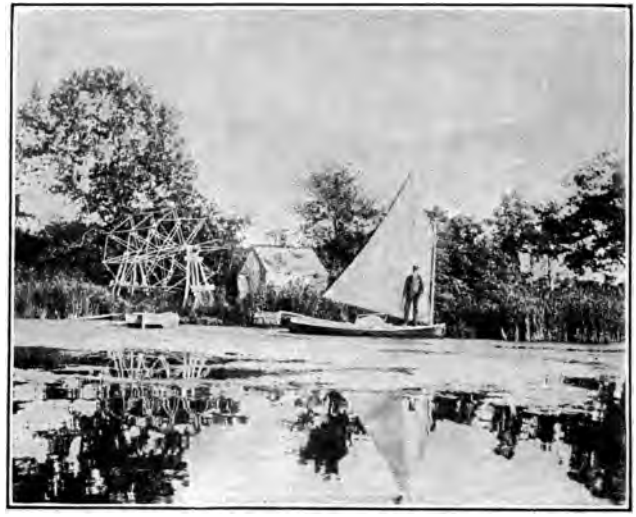
Beneath the tread of the storm cohorts the old, old earth was unmoved by a single blast, and wavered not at the stroke of conflict, for "underneath are the everlasting arms!" Thus we knew that bounds of peace had been set about this maelstrom, and that a power greater than the forces of the wind held them in the "hollow of His hand."



AFTER THE STORM.

It was a strenuous night, followed by a glorious autumn day. Night had slunk away. By the command of an Omnipotent, Omnipresent and Omniscient power, the storm had fled and the King of Light, in all His splendor, had reasserted His sway. The life-saving crew on the beach had "turned in," after a weary night's watch, thankful that no wrecks had occurred. Some hollow-hearted trees had been revealed in the crucial test of that stormy night.

Hardy young timber had been developed and strengthened by the athletic tournament in which they had been enlisted. Vapors from decaying vegetation in lowlands and meadows had been caught up and carried about as food for plant life. The flash of God's lightning had released the nitrogen from



THE OLD DOCK.

atmospheric combinations, and so plants had been succored. Thus, as we moved about grandfather's farm, we realized that the storm was beneficent and not malignant, and that angels, and not demons, had it in keeping. For did not God's sun, millions of miles away, call up the waters? Did He not direct the cold winds that precipitated them, and did not His warm-

ing rays, deflected from the raindrops, give glow to the atmosphere, and so guide its currents?

I love the rain, for I know that with it God is filling Nature's fountains from which springs, brooks and rivulets draw their life. The birds singing by the brooks make me love the God who gives joy to the birds through the waters.

The silent dews of the nighttime are His benediction upon slender and delicate plants.

The gentle showers are His blessing to blooming flowers, trailing vines and luscious fruits. The wild storm, with crashing thunder and streaked lightning, is a ministry of love to all His plantings.

The heavy blanket of white snow is His protecting covering against winter's cold until springtime calls to floral bloom.

Thus the Storm King is God's messenger of life, health and peace, when he visits grandfather's farm.

"It isn't raining rain to me:
It's raining daffodils.
In every dimpled drop I see
Wild flowers on the hills.

"The clouds of gray engulf the day,
And overwhelm the town;
It isn't raining rain to me,
It's raining roses down.

"It isn't raining rain to me,
But fields of clover bloom,
Where any buccaneering bee,
May find a bed and room.

"A health unto the happy,
A fig for him who frets,
It isn't raining rain to me,
It's raining violets."

THE VILLAGE CHURCH.

"Thy way, O God, is in the Sanctuary."—Psa. 77:13.

It is Sabbath morning on grandfather's farm. All unnecessary labor has ceased, and, with reverent, quiet joy, the day is set apart for family companionships, for communion with Nature and for worship of Nature's God. It is a beautiful Sabbath morning. What delicious fragrance all about, as the morning dews, having stayed all the night long in loving embrace of the flowers, now, startled by approaching day, kiss the blossoms good night, or good morning, and carry up on their breath the fragrance of the mignonette, the hyacinth and a wealth of seductive aromas.

"This is the Lord's own day;
I stand alone in the wide field.
It is as if a multitude
Knelt down and prayed with me."

Methought what wondrous fields, what wondrous birds, what wondrous flowers, what wondrous trees in Nature's Oratorio of Praise.

No tree was ever accursed. It was one tree—a martyr tree—that took part in the Crucifixion of our Lord. Did it not die first? And has not every tree before and since proclaimed the Glory of God and that poor martyr tree, slain and dragged in death to

bear the body of our dying Lord, has it not been glorified by becoming the symbol of a world's Salvation?

Grandfather calls, and we make ready to attend divine service at the village church. Sacred place! its belfry beckons to the living, its churchyard holds in sacred trust the bodies of the villagers' beloved dead.

We gladly joined in the procession of townspeople wending their way to the house of God.

The pastor came from the plain but cosy parsonage. He was a Godly man, saddened in visage, for was he not the confidant into whose ears were poured and on whose heart were laid the sorrow and cares of the village; brightened in visage, too, for did he not carry about with him the consolation of the Lord Jesus? So, in his very likeness, the shadows about the cross were tinged as of old by love's light from the cross. So the pastor came, and with him came the pastoress, who, in sympathetic quietude, comforts, consoles and cheers, carrying a brighter face, for she sees of the travail of the pastor's soul and is satisfied. In secret here she shares his cup, as in glory hereafter she will share his crown. So, with reverent hearts, we turned our steps and followed the leader to the house of God, the village church.

Why should there be a church when all Nature is a house of worship and every immortal soul is created to be a temple of God?

Ah, we have here love's bower in the Garden of God. A church is man's and Nature's combined gift to the glory of the Creator.

Mother Earth said: "Let me open my bosom for it," and so they furrowed deep the trenches for its resting-place. The rocks and crags cried out: "Use us for His glory," and so from quarries and hillside they laid the foundations. The forests said: "We too would help to proclaim His glory," so great trees poured out their lives that the altar might be lifted up and that it might be roofed in, sheltered and kept, while from raging fires and volcanic furnaces the old bell was cast—the bell that now calls to prayer, that rings out the joyous wedding notes, and also tolls for our loved ones here, as celestial choirs sing their welcomes over there. A church is love's conspiracy to pay affectionate tribute to the Giver of All Good, and to whose house His children may come for prayer and praise.

The pastor's words were simple, for we were but plain and simple folk. Somehow, as he in prayer lifted to God the needs of his people, as he sought Divine sympathy for the weary, heavy-hearted, as the sick were carried by him and left at the feet of the Great Physician, and there, as he confessed the sins of his people, methought, in the stillness of that sacred hour, that it was not strange that the Master forsook the waters of the Jordan, the breezes of Olivet, the shady pool of Siloam and turned His feet to the temple of God for heart comfort, where God and the common people of Galilee met; and so we found here that Jesus was in their midst.

The choir loft was not occupied by professional singers of mercenary spirit, but country youths and maidens did but lead their fathers, mothers, brothers,

THE SURF.

sisters and neighbors in the holy act of praise to God. It was a volunteer choir of praise to Him, just as we heard the birds in their freedom and joy making music for Him in the woods.

Thus we worshiped God in the little village church to which the living came and about which in silence sleep the villagers' beloved dead.

Memories of their beloved ones, now resting there in the churchyard, came up before these true-hearted worshipers like rays from the setting sun—down below the horizon, earth-concealed, lost to vision, buried from sight, yet lifting up luminous waves of ineffable beauty; or, like distant stars, which, having ceased to exist in their place and having moved on to other orbits, still shed their light upon the earth to cheer and guide.

The sermon was ended, the last song was sung, and with the pastoral benediction upon us, we moved out, better fitted for a higher enjoyment of life on grandfather's farm.

THE CHARM OF A SACRED SABBATH ON THE OLD FARM.

"I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day and heard behind me a great voice."—Rev. 1:10.

ONCE again it is Sabbath on grandfather's farm. Deep pity for him or her who in the ordinary walks of life ignores the true import of this day and with thoughtless mien the whole week through moves on in the ceaseless tides of commercial or social life and loses the mystic touch and heart impress of a Sabbath with God in the wildwood.

He who here on Sabbath day gives wings to thought, and, with perfect mental equipose, mounts up above sordid thoughts and base ideals, meets the Eternal Mind in all its wonderments, incomprehensible but love-eliciting.

The imagination, here freed from fancies of commercial and social conquests, beholds the artist of all the universe flashing his penciled rays of streaming light through measureless spaces, tracked by orbits of revolving worlds, while He tints the tiny flower with sympathetic loveliness.

Lo! He rolls the glorious landscape before our vision, framed in an environment of illimitable spaces flooded with solar glory or studded with multitudinous stars.

Oh, artist! wouldst thou paint a picture glowing

with eternal love light and breathing the breath of immortality? Spend thou one Sabbath alone with God in woody glen and blooming meadows and read the interpretation thereof.

There gently flowing waters of crystal clearness lave the feet of forest giants and hold on their throbbing bosoms the pulsating charms of alabastrine lilies,

FORGE RIVER.

while the finny tribe dart here and there in sparkling waters.

Setting suns, in herculean protest against extinguishment, roll up against western horizons waves of flashing glories, like bursting gem caskets from a million realms.

Oh, musician, thou in whose soul God hath written His melodies, and whose beating pulses do but

keep time with the rhythmic harmony of His songs in thy life, come ye to grandfather's woods on this God's Holy Day. Shut out the world, and alone with Him, amidst the melodies and harmonies of land, sea and sky, thou wilt give thy soul to ecstasies incited by His divine intonations. Thou wilt there catch the waves of music rolling in from Nature's choruses as shepherds of old, looking into the starry night, heard angelic voices flood the land and sky.

Hushed be the unhallowed spirit of Sabbath desecration that would enter in to despoil this sacred temple of divine music on grandfather's farm.

Oh, chemist! thou to whom we look to learn of God's mysterious and enchanting ways in gathering all the energies and elements of past generations to make more glorious and happy the present and oncoming multitudes, come thou apart, on this God's Holy Day, in this Divine laboratory. Rest thou here a while and watch God's great transformation scenes, as by His marvelous processes He throws His creative shuttle in His works of love and mercy. All mineral elements are, at His bidding, woven into the fabrics in which are cradled vegetable, animal and spirit life, until by His dissolving touch the fabrics fall to earthy matter and the spirit arises above all chemical combinations to the great and good God that gave it.

Oh, chemist! stop thou for a time thy devotion to the creating of deadly explosives, or thy series of distillations that debauch the grains and fruits of Nature, to craze the human brain and rob the heart of peace, and, turning aside, catch thou thy stimulus

from the Divine Chemist, whose every process on grandfather's farm is to make more happy and joyous the children of His loving care.

Oh, thou, electrician and engineer, thou who didst, with great content and joy, devote years of thy life that human professors might impart to thee some portion of the meager store of knowledge possessed by them, step thou aside on this God's Holy Day and in His wildwood note thou the energies and constructive skill displayed by Him.

Lo, His matchless power and wondrous will generate electric currents with swinging worlds and flying comets, while He giveth flight to the bird, gravitation to the raindrop and majestic curves and strength to the swaying elms.

Oh, scientist, wouldst thou hear celestial voices through the audiphone of the soul, or wouldst thou catch wireless messages from realms supernal? Then rest thou here, on this blessed day, set apart in love by Him who would speak to thee, and somehow in forest stillness there will be enchanting preachments, and from rustling leaves and rippling brooks there will come to thee ravishing sermonettes.

Out of it all thou wilt have had told thee that back of all life and power, and underneath all construction, there is the Divine Mind and the great pulsating heart of the loving and sympathetic God.

He who here would admit the flood-tides of sporting life, on this God's Holy Day, so that boisterous hilarities would break the sacred Sabbath watches of the forest and cruel sportsmen would slay or frighten away nestling birds from loving and dependent birdlets,

while the charm of God's Day in meadow and upland would lose its hallowed atmosphere for the soul; he who would thus do would undertake to walk the heavenly pavements with muddy feet, while angelic spirits and redeemed souls from all planetary worlds in heavenly choirs swept the stars and all radiant spaces with Halleluiah Choruses.

Choruses of praise to Him who is the author of all life, the possessor of all power and the loving giver of a holy and sacred Sabbath to a world of tired, heart-hungry humanity.

To such as defile the Gates of Heaven are closed, and grandfather puts up the bars against Sabbath desecration on the old farm.

THE TEMPLE IN GRANDFATHER'S WOODS.

"The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir tree, the pine tree and the box tree, together to beautify the place of my Sanctuary, and I will make the place of my feet glorious."—Isa. 60:13.

TURNING aside from the beaten paths on grandfather's farm, and entering the confines of a wooded fairyland, a melodrama in Nature, we follow a winding way through a tunnel of trees, until suddenly we find ourselves, in reverent awe, standing in the midst of a forest cathedral, where no Druid circle in grim silence waits, but where three worlds crowd in to worship.

In this sylvan seclusion, templed of God, meeting with mighty congregations, not sin-stained but glory-crowned, we intruders prostrate ourselves in silent awe and listen.

Mighty oaks, called of God from moss-covered groveling acorns, have been here lifted up into serried columns, and have swung the architraves of this, a temple not made with hands.

Pilaster after pilaster of cedar, oak and maple lend support to this glorious structure, while over all this wondrous pilation the interlacing leaves and interweaving vines swing their bewitching lacery, as if to shut in a holy of holy, and yet as if to let in the light of God's stars, the homeward flight of God's

birds and the whispering winds, as they voice at this altar, in varying accents and in united chorus, the Creator's praise.

As Atlas would carry the earth on his shoulders, so here the mineral world, that faithful steward to whose custody the Almighty has entrusted in loving keeping for man such wealth of precious minerals

THE WOODS ROAD.

and flashing gems, becomes a foundation supporting on its patient body and supplying from its arteries the life of the uplifted and uplifting Sanctuary of the woods.

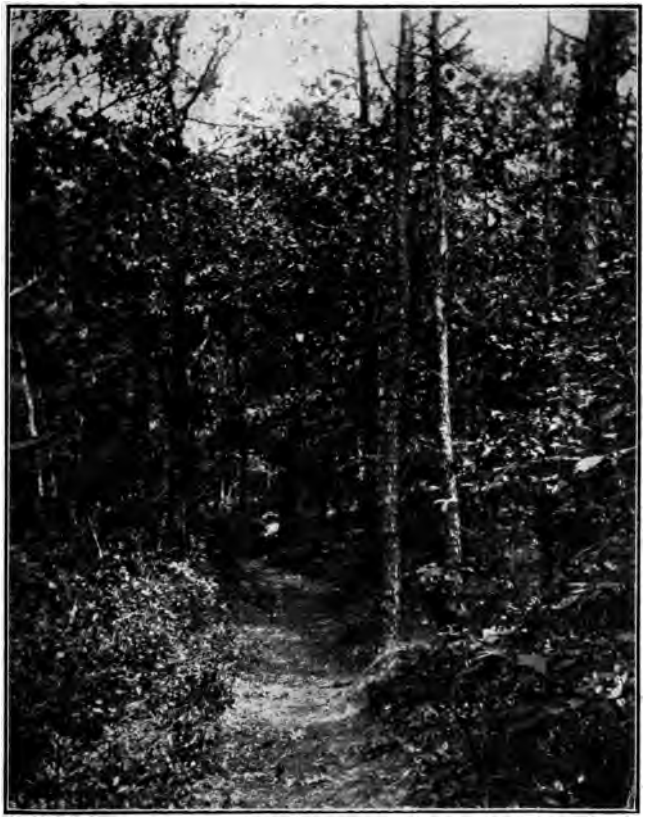
Superb carpeting! Human-made looms are mute and silent as the sprites of the air, the lea and the light give their magic touch to the earth. They

breathe upon it with the dews of the morning; they flash upon it with the torch of the sunbeam; they feed it with the flying seedlets; they awaken it; and lo! the floor of this cathedral is laid with living mosaics, not carrying the fiery light of Mars, nor yet the selfish color of greedy gold, nor the despairing black of the night watch, but calm, subduing green, the ordained green of the wildwood, while here and there, uplifted flowers, earth-rooted, heaven-painted, bid us by their example to catch our beauty from above, our light from afar and our soul life from the Divine.

We rest here in no pulseless Westminster! The architect of this Nature Temple is not dead. This structure is not a concentric of dead stones, dead timbers and dead tile. Woodsman cut it not, for it will bleed! It breathes, it moves, it grows heavenward. It is a living temple, not fashioned by mortal man. Its glory of to-day is but a foretaste of the glory of to-morrow, for the glories of this day, being absorbed into its life, burst forth renewed and mingle with the glories of the coming day, while all the denizens of the woods, from the mineral, the vegetable and the animal kingdoms, with one accord, and with one uplifted voice, unite here in the Grand Oratorio of the Creator, Preserver and Benefactor, and all of the trees of the fields do clap their hands.

And then from a choir loft of waving foliage we heard a bird sing.

Hush! A holy silence fills the mind, while a thrill of sacred joy, like multitudinous phosphorescent lights, makes rich glow upon the hearthstone of the soul, for God is speaking in the wildwood.



THE OLD INDIAN TRAIL.

Alone with God in the living temple of Nature, with eye keen to see Him in His priestly office, with ear alert to hear the voices of exhortation, counsel and praise, and with all the windows and doors of the heart wide open to the breezes and light of heaven—it's the rhapsody hour of the soul!

God is speaking. Listen! He speaks not in human words, such impotent and impossible carriers of a single heart-throb, but in Nature's still, small voice, spiritualized by the twilight, illuminated by the sunlight, made liquid by the springlets from the bosom of the earth and lifted in adoration by the arms of the forest, for all Nature is here conspiring together to interpret the heart of God.

Listen! A father's hand has struck a chord in Nature: "I love my children," and great trees and beautiful vines, shaking off their bridal garments of apple blossoms and prophetic flowerlets, bow and bend in homage under a rich and loving burden of golden and juicy fruitage. God is speaking in the fruits as He always speaks in the flowers, and as He also, in meadow and upland, tells of His love in waving corn, in golden harvest fields and in the trill of the bird song. His trees here shelter us. His mosses here form for us our pillow. His breezes cool our wearied brows and tired forms, while His birds sing for us from the tree tops, and also from the meadows on whose bosom sleep a thousand rainbows. Surely the glory of the Lord has filled the earth, as the waters cover the sea.

Hark! A cry cometh from without. It is a child's cry to a father's heart, calling to us, and we leave

this nook in the woods and, following an Indian trail, we come within sight of a quaint and strangely interesting Colonial homestead. We enter the door; the board is spread, grace is being said, for we are late to our Sunday dinner on grandfather's farm.

RESURRECTION VOICES ON GRANDFATHER'S FARM.

"Oh, death, where is thy sting?
Oh, grave, where is thy victory?"
—First Cor. 15:55.

HAST thou heard the whispers of immortality from the lips of the flowers about thee?

Their morning expansion and their twilight folding portray the varying courses of their daily life, but autumn's call in Nature's sadder hour bespeaks another and a longer sleep.

The short lease of life so effulgent in beauty is over; petal and stamen, calyx and honey pouch dissolve and vanish. Not ended, cry the genii of springtime, for behold in faith the glory of the coming days! Only believe.

What pathos there is on the farm at the approach of the winter. Who does not feel conflicting emotions when Nature puts on her resplendent garments of autumn? This is the last act in the mid-year festivities—ere the cold grasp of winter divests her of beauty and buries her currents of life in the dark earth beneath her. How calm Nature's abiding in the deathlike silence of winter, awaiting the call of the May budding season for her resurrection to another year's glory.

With what strange fascination we bend over the

death of the annual flowers, knowing that the frost that kills them does but burst the bonds of the seeds which they planted that their life may arise from the grave in the fields of their fathers.

Strange is the autumn commotion among the birds in the treetops. What gatherings and chatterings, what flutterings and calling!

The dear old nests seem all but deserted, the feeding places are almost forgotten, while great congresses are called in hedges and bushes. A strange impulse has seized these children of Nature. Something within them has told them that a season of death and destruction is coming and that "Lo, there is a happy land far, far away," where eternal summers beckon and where flowers always bloom and birds forever sing.

The farmer, with a deep longing for a similar destiny, watches these gathered songsters following the impulses of Nature, and then, musing by the fireplace, asks himself the question: "If birds, following the instinct of Nature, move on to perennial joys and everlasting summers, why should not I, as the winter of old age approaches and my heart yearns for summer and the vigor of youth, pass to joys that are eternal? Why should not I believe the same whispers of Nature and rest in the hope of immortal reunions?"

Thus he spoke, and, taking down a cocoon from over the mantle, he remembered how this little caterpillar, when quietly feeding on a common cabbage, must have heard a silent voice calling him to get ready for translation to a better and a higher life.

So this worm, crawling down from the plant on which he was feeding, laboriously spun his shroud, and when all was ready calmly and quietly entered his tomb, and all was forgotten. Here he waits and only waits for a higher summons, when, bursting forth to a larger, better and winged life—putting on the robes of sunlight and bedecked with all the colors from sparkling gems and flashing jewels—he will soar away to feed on honeys distilled from flowers of marvelous beauty—his old life forgotten, his new life a superabundance of happiness.

Year after year on grandfather's farm I have watched the multitudinous blossom- and fruit-bearing children of Nature living out their sinless testimonies by a joyous life of complete dependence upon the goodness of God, and I have witnessed their anticipations and preparations for the oncoming winter into which they have vanished or fallen asleep. Then I have awaited the resurrection call of the springtime, and lo! Eden bloomed again, while seemingly the very birds of Paradise trilled their songs over fen, forest and moor. Then, over and above a thousand philosophies, I knew that God reigned, and that in every line of Nature is written the sweet and sure prophecy of the resurrection.

I saw, in our country home, the exquisite beauty of my father's life of faith, and there I witnessed the glory of my mother's joyous death in eager confidence of a glorified life hereafter, and, over and above a thousand wrecked sophistries, I knew that my Redeemer lived.

As autumn flowers devoutly bend their heads to

winter's chill, with faith in the coming springtime, and as birds move out towards summer lands, so mother plumed her spirit's wings for her heavenly flight.

The flowers bloomed again. The birds sing in the sunny lands of the South and the surest philosophy

THE OLD COLONIAL BURYING GROUND.

of all the ages, the voice of Nature, tells me that my parents are reunited in the summer land of the soul.

Do I fear the dawn of that eternal morning when visions of celestial glory shall first burst upon my sight?

The birdlet breaking through its shell into the untried life of this present strange world hath instant joy and sweet content in bird-mother love, and bird-mother

love, like the fragrance of the rose and the honey of the flowers, is a gift from God.

The tiny squirrel born amidst the dangerous denizens of the forest, but cuddling close to the maternal heart hath no dread or affright, while the brooding hen covering her chickens under her wings did give to the Master his imagery of Divine love.

The loving God of Nature did decree that births into this earth world, where dangers lurk and many hearts are cruel, should be panoplied by protecting love and free from fear and alarm.

Has He not by these same tokens undertaken to teach us that when He shall call his children to the birthday of the soul's celestial life in that other world where no dangers invade and where all hearts are tender he will cause their celestial life to open with the sweetness of the flower and with the joy of the bird song at the dawn of the morning? Death is but the door to life!

I fear not the dawn of the eternal day where angels greet and where the loving God stands in the portals keeping watch and guard over all His own.

Nature and the Good Old Book tell me that "I shall be satisfied when I awake in His likeness."

So also thought the farmer, and, going to the window, he looked out through the small panes of glass towards the old Colonial burying-ground, in which sleep the bodies of his forefathers, and he spoke, in the words of Scripture: "Shall these too live again?" And a voice that speaks in the wildwood, in bird song and in starlight, spoke to the farmer in love and affection: "I am the resurrection and the

THE CREEK.

life. He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live."

Oh! there is faith in the old homestead, for a voice from within, a voice from without and a voice from on high—with one accord and in Nature's full harmony—make a pledge of a resurrection hour. And so the farmer sows his seed in faith that in the fulness of time the sun will call the buried seed to the full glory of the summer-time, and that he too some day will be called to the better land.

BACKWARD HO!

"The Master is come and calleth for thee."—John 11:28.

THE beauty of the forest, the aromatic fragrance of blossoming flowers, the shadows chased away by sunshine and the ministry of service so sweetly displayed in panoramic glory on grandfather's farm were correlated to the inner life of that "wondrous lover of Nature," our sister Bessie, lovingly referred to herein. She who here gloried in the wonderful works of God now rejoices amidst the flowers of Paradise, and in angelic companionships has holy fellowships in the presence of Nature's God.

We wondered at her here! She who loved the bloom of fields and the divine-like whispers of great forests—she who bent in love over the little violets and held sweet converse with the stars, how could she leave regions where Nature's heavenly gifts and holy companionships in country life fed the mind and made the atmosphere of the Eternal the daily climate of the soul? How could she leave all these and, plunging into the crowded city school, devote her hours to the child of the tenement and her rambles of love and mercy, to paved streets and city air? How could she? The secret is ours, and we share it with thee. God called her higher, and we laid her away near her father and mother in silent sleep and where her loved flowers bloom.

Returning heavy-hearted with our sorrow, but deeply thankful for her joys, my bereaved sisters lovingly handed me her Bible as my heritage—her best treasure! I reverently opened its covers, and there between its pages learned a secret of her inner life that solved that mystery of her city living. It read like this:

MORICHES BATHING BEACH.

I said, "Let me walk in the field."
He said, "No; walk in the town."
I said, "There are no flowers there."
He said, "No flowers, but a crown."

I said, "But the clouds are black,
There is nothing but noise and din;"
And He wept as He sent me back.
"There is more," He said; "there is sin."

I said, "But the air is thick,
And fogs are veiling the sun."
He answered, "Yet souls are sick
And souls in the dark undone."

I said, "I shall miss the light,
And friends will miss me, they say."
He said, "Choose you to-night
If I am to miss you or they."

I pleaded for time to be given;
He said, "Is it hard to decide?
It will not seem hard in heaven
To have followed the steps of your guide."

We loved her here, but understood her not! So now, with her open Bible before me and with the call of the city reaching us, can we wonder as to what the true mission of the Nature-lover is? Looking further into the recesses of that now doubly sacred book, I found hidden therein another quotation:

"A little girl at her evening prayer was heard to say: 'And I saw a poor little girl on the street today, cold and barefooted, but it is none of our business, is it, God?' "

"None of our business!" wandering and sinful,
All through the streets of the city they go,
Hungry and homeless in the wild weather—
"None of our business!" Dare we say so?

"None of our business!" children's wan faces,
Haggard and old with their suffering and sin;
Hold fast your darlings on tender, warm bosoms,
Sorrow without, but the homelight within.

What does it matter that some other woman—
Some common mother—in bitter despair,
Wails in a garret or sits in a cellar
Too broken-hearted for weeping or prayer?

"None of our business!" sinful and fallen,
How they may jostle us close on the street!
Hold back your garment! Scorn! They are used to it;
Pass on the other side lest you should meet.

"None of our business!" On then the music;
On with the feasting, though hearts break forlorn;
Somebody's hungry, somebody's freezing,
Somebody's soul will be lost ere the morn.

Somebody's dying—On with the dancing!
One for earth's pottage is selling his soul;
One for a bauble has bartered his birthright,
Selling his all for a pitiful dole.

THE LIFE-SAVING CREW. UNCLE EZRA HAWKINS IN COMMAND.

Ah! but one goeth abroad on the mountains,
Over lone deserts, with burning, deep sands,
Seeking the lost ones (it is His business!)
Bruised though His feet are and torn though His hands!

Thorn-crowned His head and His soul sorrow-stricken
(Saving men's souls at such infinite cost);
Broken His heart for the grief of the nations—
It is His business, saving the lost!

Duty calls us away. It is God's call. The vacation ends, the trunks are packed, one more walk in the

forest, one more sail on the bay, one more farewell to loved ones.

We watched the waving of the hands, we heard the receding songs of the birds; an old gray squirrel ran to the topmost branches of a great tree to see us off; and another chapter of life's joys had been written, bound and filed away on memory's shelves, to which we go from time to time in "the quiet hour" and revel again in the sweet and loved recollections of grandfather's farm.

Celestial Phones

or

Voices from the Invisible

CONTENTS

	PAGE
ANTICIPATORY	5
PRELUDE	6
INTERLUDE	7
POSTLUDE	9
WITHIN THE SHEEN	11
OUR VANISHED LOVED ONES	51
A VISION BY THE SEA	62

ANTICIPATORY.

FELLOW PILGRIM:

Christmas—Easter—the Setting Sun and the Starlit Night—speak to us in the mystic melody of silent intonations, causing no sound vibrations, yet transmitting their sweet messages to the innermost soul, just as we are bound to each other by golden cords of Christian Brotherhood, immaterial and invisible, yet stronger than links of steel.

Please open this book and visit with me that most real place of all, commonly called "the unreal." You will see invisible forms, hear noiseless footfalls, feel the touch of spirits, and, I trust, partake of heavenly calm.

Yours in Him,

S. L. MERSHON.

MONTCLAIR, N. J.

PRELUDE.

A SHORT time since, I took ship at Providence, Rhode Island, at evening tide. The steamer carried over one thousand souls.

As we moved down the river and out into the deep, joy, animation, and music filled that gliding palace, while pyramids of electric lamps poured a flood of golden light upon us in the cabin.

I moved out upon the deck, and all was dark. Great angry billows rolled tempestuously about us, while rushing winds tore their way over the hurricane deck.

It was a wild storm without.

It was all peace and joy within.

Strange phenomenon! Why, amidst such a storm, should there be such a calm?

Ah! something weird was playing with the hearts of men.

It held us mentally, as it were, in a Haven of Calms, landlocked from a raging sea of fear.

There was supreme faith in an *invisible* pilot at the wheel.

Something above reason saw something beyond the range of vision, "as seeing Him who is invisible," and we were at rest.

INTERLUDE.

I FOUND my way into a "Home for the Deaf and Dumb," and there I met a man in the middle of life who once was in perfect physical condition, but now deaf, dumb, and blind.

Eyes sightless.—The beauties of the world are entirely shut out.

Ears soundless.—The melodies, symphonies, and harmonies of love and life are mute or dead at that golden highway to the soul.

Tongue speechless.—A pent-up mind, starved of love's messages and life's beauties, is not even permitted to relieve itself by one outcry of despair.

A soul in solitary confinement, enshrined in the horror of perpetual night and locked in the maddening hall of ceaseless silence!

He seemed like a strange and silent craft taking its mysterious way in solitude over the darkened sea of human life.

I said to a friend, "What a prisoner!"

My friend replied, "Ah! but he is the happiest man here."

"How do you know?" I responded. "Ask him, and he cannot hear. He has no voice to tell you, and those sightless eyes are expressionless."

"Wait a moment," he replied; and taking hold of this strange being's hand he, by an appeal to the sense

of touch, made in that hand signs which I knew were from the language of the deaf and dumb.

My friend told him that I thought he must be unhappy, and requested him to send a message for me that would explain how it was that I was mistaken.

As the sun suddenly bursts through a rift in the clouds overhanging a dark and turbid sea, so the radiance of an ineffable light billowed the place where we stood, as there flashed back a message translated for me from mystic signals.

"I am simply waiting for the time when these eyes shall be opened and I shall see the King in His glory; these ears shall be unstopped and I shall hear the heavenly music; and this tongue shall be loosened and I shall sing of Him who hath redeemed me from my sins."

He was dwelling on the border-line between two worlds, with windows open toward Jerusalem; and he evidently saw something beyond the vale.

POSTLUDE.

I HAD purchased a ticket at Cleveland for Chicago and was comfortably seated in a sleeping car when suddenly, as we left the depot, a strange feeling of alarm came over me. I could not shake it off. As the conductor came through the train I inquired of him whether we stopped again within or near the city, as I desired to leave the train. He answered "No."

I was deeply stirred, for something said clearly, distinctly, and repeatedly to me, "You are in great danger."

Soon, with the train rushing along at the rate of fifty miles an hour, I fully realized that I was helpless—and yet that warning! There was but one refuge:

> "There is a calm, a sure retreat,
> 'Tis found beneath the Mercy Seat."

I bowed my head in prayer and asked God for special protection from disaster. Just at that moment there was a crash.

I was sitting in Section Six, the upper compartment of which was hinged exceptionally low. The springs on that berth had broken. The shaking of the cars loosened the catch, and the whole berth, loaded with bedding and side boards, fell to the ends of the guard chains with terrible force, crushing my stiff hat; but

as my head was bowed in prayer I escaped what otherwise must have been a fatal blow.

The conductor sprang to me and exclaimed, "I thought you were killed." No; a voice had spoken to me.

Whence came it?

WITHIN THE SHEEN.

WILL you link your imagination with mine and fly with me into the distant past?—yet not very far.

I would have you stand with me on the hilltop where the City of Dothan is built on one of nature's pinnacles, and from that high point I would have you look over a fertile valley robed in the luxurious verdure of unsmitten Palestine. As the blackness of night has swept in over mountain and vale, and the city has fallen into slumber, I would have you watch while the chariots and horsemen of cruel Syria of the north come silently as possible, drawing their iron net of war about the unconscious little city in which abode Elisha the man of God.

Invading warriors polished their spears that they might the more surely reach in vindictive hate the beating hearts of fellow-men; while the sword was whetted that it might cut the more readily through nerves and sinews, to turn loving wives into widowhood, and children into orphans, or worse—yea, far worse were the awful thoughts that blazed in the hearts of the war-calloused veterans waiting for the dawning day ere they should sack the little city.

With the first

FLASHING RAYS OF LIGHT

gleaming over the distant hilltops the wild cry of alarm bestirs the city, while its sons flock to its walls in dis-

may. Among them is a young man, the servant of the prophet Elisha, who, having caught the infection of the panic, rushes back to his master with the despairing cry, "Alas, my master! How shall we do?"

We would listen, as calmly amidst the fearful tumult the old man replies, "Fear not, for they that be with us are more than they that be with them." Then, falling on his knees, the old man sweetly prayed, saying, "Lord, I pray thee open his eyes that he *may see.*" And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man, and *he saw*—"And behold the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire around about Elisha." Somehow the Syrian host vanished from the young man's mind; the terror-stricken crowd, surging through the narrow streets of the city, was forgotten; and the young man, with a soul glance into the invisible world, saw eternal verities and witnessed omnipotent power surging about God's servant in defensive phalanxes.

Prayer-called—Heaven-sent—Love-commanded, the celestial army lay in the calm curtainings of the spiritual world, separated by the simple veiling of human limitations from the wild concourse of the terror-stricken crowd.

I would also have you read with me from that poetical gem in Hebrew prophecy, the book of Joel, while we consider the promise contained therein, that the Holy Spirit shall appear in all His heavenly light in this world of ours, when the daughters shall prophesy, and the old men shall dream dreams, and the young men shall see visions.

Does it seem incredible to thee that God should re-

veal Himself to His children by other means than that of the physical sense of sound or sight? When in that

SUBLIME TRANSFIGURATION HOUR

a voice from the invisible world cleft the clouds, saying, "This is my beloved Son; hear Him," it was not to reveal the heart of God the Father to Christ, but that the Saviour might be magnified before men as the incarnation of divine life. Christ did not need that attesting voice, for He already knew His oneness with the Father; but gross, sensuous, materialistic men needed once for all the revelation of the invisible to human senses—hence, that voice of identification from the clouds.

The deepest revelations of love and tenderness made to our dear ones are manifest the most when unseen by human eye and unheard by human ear.

Wilt thou deny to the deaf and blind child the sweet ministries of mother love because he cannot hear or see? Or will you permit them in heart language, known only to each other, to develop stronger, deeper, and holier ties than we know of—made more intense because of these very impediments? Knowledge shuts out the necessity for sight and sound.

"Sweet voices come to every ear,
Bright visions to all eyes appear.
The touch divine each soul may feel,
And God in us Himself reveal.
We see Him in each beam of light,
His are the voices of the night,
The myriad stars that shine on high
Record His name across the sky.

" But brighter far the gems that shine
Upon the pages all divine;
The gems of truth that gleam afar
More brilliant than the brightest star.
To His inviting words give heed,
And listen when He deigns to plead;
Hear what those heavenly voices say,
And every gracious call obey."

Under the spell of divine influences a man may close his eyes, and there will float before his spiritual vision scenes of such transcendent splendor that the tongue will fail and language must break down in all attempts to reveal the scene; while in the corridors of the soul angelic voices will ring and the language of heaven will float by melodies rippling in from celestial seas of song.

Has God entered into thy life? Then let us for a moment stop straining our eyes for Him along the highway of the clouds; and our gazing down the paths through meadows and forests. Entering into the heart, we will close the door, pull down the curtains, stir the embers of love on the hearthstone of the affections, for He is within, a resident of the soul.

Hast thou prepared well the furnishings? When love and purity preside in thy heart, then thou wilt hang on the walls of memory, that most sublime of all picture galleries, only scenes of holy joy, while the music of thy thoughts, as they sound the measure of thy spirit, will but bring thee into closer communion with Him who enters into the guest chamber of thy heart. Guard well thy guest, keeping out all that would tend to mar His joy or make unhappy His stay.

The prophet Joel teaches us that the day shall come

when the servants of the Lord may have in this world heaven's atmosphere without them and heaven's climate within them, and, being engulfed thereby, they shall float therein as a casket filled to the brim floats in the great tide of the sea. As that

GLORIOUS PROMISE BURSTS FORTH

from the stereopticon of prophecy I would have you catch its picture on the screen of history, so I would add to our vista that marvelous revelation, when in the fullness of time *there came* that baptism of the Holy Ghost upon the waiting Church. Then Pentecost stood out before the world: the crystalline throne to which the invisible but unmistakably present Holy Spirit came, as He assumed the sway and directed the influences that were to guide the Church of God into all truth, the child of God into all light, and the world to the foot of the Cross.

I would ask you now to forget the limbs that bind us to the ground; the stomach that seeks the orchard, the harvest field, and the vineyard; the lungs that make their appeal to the air; and, higher up, the eye that claims the æsthetical and clings to the beautiful in nature; but flee with me up into that observatory where all revelation must come by soul vision and spiritual emotion—where, alone, thou art divorced from the earth, earthy, and can take thine outlook upon the great sea of the Infinite.

Soon all that is visible and tangible in thee will sink back into the earth, pass away into the air, and make its journey to the sea; excepting only that part of thee which is the flashing spark from the infinite flame of

divine thought; *that* must pass again somewhere into the invisible realm.

Ponder, then, with me as to what are these invisible forces that are constantly surging against us. How can we let into our souls the blessed emotions that are sweeping about us, and how can we link thereto the holy emotions that are playing within us?

Two worlds have floated in together, and lie broadside to broadside. How are the bridges of thought to be thrown across? Are they ever thrown across, carrying messengers from each to the other?

The stars, hundreds of millions of miles away, speak to us without a voice. Men who disappeared a thousand years ago still help to shape the thought of the world. They shot into the world, ran along on its surface for threescore years and ten, and then glanced off into the Invisible; but, while gone, are in fact to-day molding the minds of men. The Almighty God, infinite, eternal, the Creator of all things, is by some supposed to be imprisoned in a celestial city, walled in by His own hands. Having completed the superb workmanship of a world that He has been building up through all the ages, has He at last left man—His highest creation—alone and helpless on top of this marvelous structure, beyond the reach of his Master's voice and with no visible escape? When man at last drops off—— Where? where? or nowhere?

Can anyone sincerely ask the question, "Is there a God in the world?" This is a question easily propounded and quickly answered. Come with me to Newport, and let us wander into that old and tenantless tower. If I should exclaim, "This structure is

a freak of nature, and was never built by human hands!" you would challenge the rash statement and then demonstrate that from the general plan of the edifice and its adaptation to man's requirements it must have been designed by an intelligent mind and constructed by human hands for human occupation. I transcribe to my tourist notebook your argument, and simply change the word "tower" to "world," and the words "architect and builder" to "God," and rest my case on your own logic as to whether there is a God in this world.

In that similitude we but widen out the thought under the same infallible rules of proof.

A line that runs straight for the distance of a mile, when carried forward will be straight to the realms beyond the farthest star.

Pantheism exalts the design. Christianity worships the designer back and above the design.

Pantheism glorifies the house. Christianity crowns the architect and builder of the house.

The house in which you live is but an imperfect representation of a luminous picture in the mind of your architect. It is but a soul vision caught in wood and mortar. No chemist by analyzing it, and no scientist by rending it apart, can discover the thought which permeated it or the mind that inspired it.

The architect is in the building, and yet he is not of the building.

The world is the matchless expression of matchless thought—the mighty design of the Almighty Designer.

The logic of the house is but the logic of nature.

"The heavens declare the glory of God and the

firmament showeth His handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech and night unto night showeth forth knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard."

Let us take the wings of the morning, and fly up, up, and see if we cannot distill from the clouds sweet whispers of love; from the sun's rays melodies rich with divine heart-throbs as they vibrate, having been touched for us by the unseen fingers of God. I believe that back of the rustling of the leaves of the trees of the forest, back of the stars singing together, back of all nature's melodies, we find the Master Mind of all the universe sitting in the great dome of heaven, from whose chimes ring out nature's harmonies. Let us climb up the winding stairs of faith, and we, the children of the Musician, standing at His side, will see Him bend over to us, and will hear Him speak the sweet words of father love that are better, grander, and holier sounds than those which with rush and roar sweep through nature's vaulted temple, though the former are heard only by His children standing at His side. God of the universe, God of father, mother—our God—speak this hour to us through Thy Holy Spirit for the Christ's sake.

Sometimes as we contemplate the vastness of nature and the overwhelming power of Almighty God, the heart cries out, "Does He care for poor insignificant me? Am I not lost track of by Him in the vast surging tide and ceaseless flow of humanity?" So I inaudibly spoke in solitude amidst the shadows of a mighty forest, when a little violet, nestling under a sheltering rock, replied to me, and said to my soul: "The great

sun cares for me. I draw from it my life, my beauty, and my fragrance. There is but one sun to me, and it acts as if I am the only violet; for it fills and satisfies my whole nature. One supreme joy, however, is mine, that while not robbing me in the least, there is enough of my sun for all the other violets, and so it and I live, but not I, for it liveth in me."

Thus I discovered that the mission of the great sun in the physical world is but a partial expression of the mission of Jesus the Christ in the spiritual world. It redeems out of darkness and death and exalts to life and light.

" God of the granite and the rose,
Soul of the sparrow and the bee,
The mighty tide of being flows,
Through all Thy creatures, *out from Thee.*
It leaps to life in grass and flowers;
Through every grade of being runs,
Till from creation's radiant towers
Its glory streams in stars and suns.

" God of the granite and the rose,
Soul of the sparrow and the bee,
The mighty tide of being flows,
Through all Thy creatures, *back to Thee.*
Thus round and round the circle runs,
An endless sea without a shore,
Till men and angels, stars and suns,
Unite to praise Thee evermore."

So I find all nature spiritualized. As the sun in the midst of the great solar system, with all its infinite number of planetary and meteoric bodies charged with a natural trend toward " outer darkness," is gradually drawing and drawing them to itself, so the Sun of

Righteousness stands in the midst of life, with all His magnetic power gradually but surely drawing the naturally wayward sons of men to Himself. The two contending forces in the physical world are typical of the two mightier contending forces in the spiritual world.

The soul of man is too large for its earthly tabernacle of clay called the human body; hence, the latter falls into dissolution in the short space of threescore years and ten, while the immortal life within moves on in co-existence with the eternal Creator of all things.

The mind of man is too capacious of vision to be alone dependent upon the optic nerves for sight, and too fond of music and converse to be limited by the auricular channels to the mind. So we find the blind seeing and the deaf hearing through strange channels and along mysterious highways.

Man sees visions beyond the vista of physical sight.

He hears amidst the sacred silences of his soul's temple, while silent stars speak to him of God, and the rocks and flowers voice to him the messages of infinite power and love.

Man's inner nature hungers so keenly in the hours of his loftiest aspirations that physical appetite is forgotten while the soul craves sympathy and feeds upon love and hope.

He feels the touch of kindred spirits without calling into play nerves of sensation.

So divine-like is man in the midst of the sacred bowers of his own Eden home that he calls into existence immortal life, and the children of his love live on forever.

Such human life is awfully grand!

In length it is henceforth co-existent with God.

In height it reaches up to the foot of the eternal throne, while in depth who can sound it with the line of love or fathom it with the plummet of black despair?

Is not man's nature too exalted to be satisfied with sin?

Should not the soul of every rational being abhor sin?

The protest of truth against sin is like the protest of the Muses against malignant discords in Sacred Oratorios.

The protest of virtue against vice is like the protest of the spirit of music against the ruthless barbarism that would seize the harp strings while they are vibrating with the soul's most sacred emotions and would convert them into snares for rats, lizards, and serpents.

How can it be possible for God to arrange, classify, and determine the moral accountability of each individual in this mighty army of humanity which has passed, is passing, and will pass through the ages out of this world into eternity? So much of heredity, environment, physical and mental weakness having operated to warp and twist the moral natures, how can moral responsibility be fixed?

I have learned a great lesson from the sea, which explains how the greatest physical law in nature—gravitation—illustrates what may be the working of the wonderful law of final judgment.

Far out where the ocean is fathomless, like the sea of eternity, to human thinking, from all directions there flows in from time to time the débris of the world. All manner of materials, of varying shapes,

sizes, and weights, perchance pass together out and down into the deep, but each to its proper level by that law of gravitation which by divine decree passes unerring judgment on the specific gravity of all.

Is it more strange that the Creator of all should have and enforce a law of moral accountability that would give to the highest virtues the greatest rewards and to the deepest vices the deepest condemnation?

It seems to me that as I look through the open doors of the vegetable and animal worlds I behold this same awful moral conflict raging amidst the trees of the forest, the fruits of the orchard, and the flowers of the garden. At the same time the animal world, struggling in a pandemonium of horrors, appears to reveal the fact that all nature does verily groan and travail in pain until now.

There are two forces in nature—the Benevolent and the Malevolent.

A power in nature plants a tree for luscious fruitage; thereupon a force in nature sends the insects to suck its life, blight its flowers, and sting its fruit.

The desire of certain dogs to kill birds of heavenly plumage and angelic song originated not in the tender heart of God.

The disposition of the cat, when hunger is satisfied, to amuse itself with the dying agonies of a mouse, rending it limb from limb, is not of Him who watcheth the sparrow when it falls.

So pondering, I discover that while hateful treatment develops viciousness in the horse and dog, and while neglect destroys the orchard and vineyard, loving care brings the spirit of gentleness to the brute and

self-sacrificing labor produces the highest vintage. So love redeems all nature and becomes the shield against the forces that make for evil and death, and lifts to a higher and better life the recipients of its care.

A poorly clad, poverty-stricken, orphaned apprentice, day after day, on his way to work, watched the unequal struggle of certain wild flowers for existence against choking weeds and crowding brambles.

Learning to love them, through sympathy he lifted the plants, one by one, from their dreary places and replanted them in his little garden under the shelter of a great stone fence, which protected them from the blasts of the north wind, while they drank in the life-giving rays of the sun.

When the heavens withheld for a space their dews, he watered them from the nearby spring, while with tender hands he nourished their roots and guarded their beds.

Month by month and year by year love's nurture developed richer bloom and lovelier flowers, until the gardener, now an old man, standing in the midst of his floral bowers and leaning on his staff, said, "Lo, I have redeemed these wild flowers to their perfection by love and have crucified myself to the outside world all the days of my life that I might cause them to attain to and express in their lives the Master's true design, which He implanted in their natures. I wonder if I am not a Christ to these flowers, having given my life to them because of love that they might be redeemed to God's great plan?" And so he gave them back to God in all their beauty, for he believed not that heresy that any one of them

" Is born to blush unseen
And waste its sweetness on the desert air,"

for they were all in God's great garden, and He who created them and who is the lover of the lowly, and ever in his world, witnessed here a type of Gethsemane and Calvary in a little floral world which had been redeemed by vicarious love.

The little girl playing in the wild woods found the hidden little offspring of the wild cat. Taking the group of kittens to her home, she brooded over them with sweet childish love which they at times resented, but more often reciprocated. Later in life she, then a matron, loved and petted the descendants of her first charge, while in the evening-tide of her aged life, sitting in the old armchair, with the family pet of a much later generation mewing by the fireside, she thought, " I wonder if I too have not redeemed this generation by love, and have I not put back into that nature some of the spirit of God—see how this kitten loves me."

If we can charge inanimate nature with the forces of evil, how reasonable it is to believe that we can implant in animate nature the spirit of good!

Surely in the day of this world's final glory we shall witness the fulfillment of the prophet's vision in which the lambs rested with the ravenous beasts, then redeemed. The trees of the fields will then clap their hands amidst blossoming bowers, while parched deserts will burst forth in floral bloom, for all creation, animal, vegetable, and mineral, has groaned and travailed in pain for that hour of the New Birth.

Surely a New Earth will be the offspring of vicarious and redemptive love.

In that day the Master will see of the travail of His soul and will be satisfied.

The Creator of all things gave iron to man as one of his blessings. Iron is charged with God's love, and yet the assassin forges from it the stiletto. If righteousness and evil so contend in inanimate objects as well as in the highest order of creation, why may we not see the same fearful conflict everywhere, including, as a participant, the serpent in the Garden of Eden?

A few facts are demonstrated in this connection.

There is a power in the animal and vegetable world that makes for life.

There is a force in the animal and vegetable world that makes for death.

The conflict between them is incessant.

Love has redeeming and exalting power wherever applied.

All animate creation seeks eternal life—either through rootlet or seedlet.

While the vegetable and animal kingdoms, amenable to this universal law that makes for everlasting life, are satisfied through offspring, this is not so of the soul that is born of God.

That soul is a divine entity.

No inanimate matter has ever been annihilated. There is no such thing as annihilation in the universe of God.

Scientifically, disappearance never means destruc-

tion, and, logically, ignorance of our own destiny can never imply the destruction of the soul.

Truth is what we seek, and truth we must discover! The most inscrutable mystery in all creation is man's terrible responsibility to know the truth.

Nature knows no pardon for ignorance and no leniency for error. Ignorance of too high pressure in a steam boiler never saved an engineer from an explosion. Error in under-calculating the force of the wind never saved a sailor from death.

Our cemeteries, with many of our loved ones, sent there to untimely graves, are silent witnesses to the inaccuracy of human thought and errancy in human calculations.

In the moral realm the same fearful responsibility seems to attach itself to error in thought.

The sea of spiritual life on this planet is crowded with moral wrecks stranded or engulfed because of honestly intended but ignorant moral instruction at home, in the school, and in the church.

If ignorance is a doorway through which death stalks and seizes our children; if error in instruction does damn the morals of our sons and daughters, what may be the fate of our own immortal existence by the application of erroneous thought to that most sacred of all trusts committed to our thinking—

OUR SPIRITUAL DESTINY?

In the moral realm ignorance stands for danger, and error is synonymous with death!

Let us, then, with supreme fidelity to the cause of truth, and with minds appreciative of such a stupen-

dous responsibility, move further along the line of inquiry which is so tragically important to universal man.

The world concedes the presence of a supreme mind in this great universe, yet there are many who seem to think that it is irrational to believe that the human mind can be put in such accord with the divine mind that the latter can actually control and direct the former.

These very ones will admit that the desire and influence of such a supreme mind must be and are toward the highest and best good, and yet they deny the possibility of divine control over human minds. The teaching of our blessed Lord was that by the submission of the human will to the divine there would come into the life of man the overruling mind of God.

The objectors to this proposition have been present in audiences when some operator possessing great power of will and thought has, through *voluntary submission* of the will of his subject, caused the latter to think his thoughts and perform his deeds.

Why, then, does it seem to anyone incredible that the Supreme Mind of all the universe should influence the consenting mind, but lovingly permit it to exercise freedom of will should it desire to release itself even from the control of infinite love?

If we call upon Him who is invisible, can He answer by *active* interposition in human affairs?

One barrier—to many minds, an insurmountable one—seems to intervene. Can He set aside the "laws of nature" in response to the pleading of His children? Thought rules matter, untrammeled, irresistible; and

thought is moved and swayed by love. Of this we are daily witnesses.

Sitting in my library, with one of my children playing on the floor, I am suddenly startled by my child's piercing cry for protection, as a book case comes "toppling over."

Terrible situation! All the "inexorable laws" of materialistic nature are at work to make sure the destruction of that child before my very eyes.

The book case is falling in strict accord with the "laws of gravitation." I am held fast by "the force of inertia, which causes all matter at rest to remain at rest." Can I work a miracle and set aside nature's laws in answer to that child's cry to my father heart?

SOMETHING ACTS!

What is it? Matter? Ah, no! a force called *mind* acts on matter. It has no *fulcrum* and no *leverage*. It ignores all natural rules of attraction and repulsion. No law in matter applies to it, but by behest of *will* it causes a human arm of many pounds' weight to move. That immaterial, invisible, and indefinable something called mind sways matter in the human arm, *intercepts* the laws of gravitation, *nullifies* the power of inertia, all in answer to a child's *prayer* to a human father's heart.

Mind caused that motion—mind governed that motion, and the laws of nature became simply the obedient slaves to its will. Mind in the human body by its will-power controls the laws of its limited physical being, just as the same natural laws in wider cycles are governed and controlled by an infinite mind—even the

mind of God. Surely the servant is not greater than his Lord.

Man, however, turned his back on God at the dawn of human history, and then was witnessed the carnival of sin from which the human race has been struggling to find its way back.

When first amidst the wealth of primeval forests and floral beauty man appeared and became the abode of the first human thought, that being must have been sinless. A moment, a period of time, existed in that first life before the spirit of rebellion to moral law seized upon him. Perchance he poised on that sublime height for but a single moment, but in that poise

PURITY WAS REGNANT.

Then came "the fall." Some say that there was no "fall," but that there was an evolutionary rise. We accept that dictum. Thus by sin man was lifted from the Elysian fields of purity where he had reveled in the sweet smiles of his soul's approval. He was by sin exalted from the benignant atmosphere of heavenly perfection to the bleak mountain heights where the rough crags and rugged caverns of abutting and decoying sin have e'er since in delusive mockery maddened the soul. They have benumbed by their searing scars the delicate sensibilities of his original spiritual life.

That sweet angel, Heredity, whose blissful mission it is to gather up all the blessed fruit germs of each generation and strew them as seed in the harvest fields of oncoming multitudes, has found her plantings

mixed with the tares of a poisoned and polluted growth.

Thus conscience became almost mute; thought took on its selfish bias; superstition enveloped the race and the black horrors of antediluvian and subsequent ages swept in upon a world. From this moral débris man cried out wildly for help. The "soul of nature" had sent to man the cooling sea breezes, and he in turn worshiped

THE LEVIATHANS OF THE DEEP.

The "world's life" had given to man the beasts of the fields to bear his burdens and to satisfy his hunger. Appeasing the latter for the moment, the cravings of man's spiritual nature bent his knees in worship to the brutes. So while the intelligence, love, and tenderness of "a great predominating unity in nature" spoke to humanity through forests, flowers, and sparkling streams, a great cry of despair went up from the universal man who had been blinded and depraved by sin.

Out from amidst the smoke of human sacrifices the gurgling waters of the bloody Ganges and a thousand horrible forms of insane worship, a great weird and agonized chorus of misery flooded the heavens. God knew that the human race, cursed by its own sins, could find no story of redemption in nature, and was sinking into the bottomless abyss of certain death. A new voice to speak in nature became necessary. The occasion demanded a new voice of righteousness, heralding some plan of salvation. A new element had come into this world—the element of sin. If man had

not sinned, the revelation of God in nature would have been complete for him.

He who looks for God in nature will find in nature all the attributes of God as displayed for man before human sin entered this world.

Human sin was not in the world at the creation, only divine love for oncoming man, so the works of early creation—the rocks, fields, and forests—speak to us of all the divine attributes, excepting redemption from sin.

After physical creation sin entered the moral realm of this planet. Then its divine antidote of necessity appeared in the spiritual life of Jesus the Christ. Thus we have

A DUAL MESSAGE FROM GOD.

First: God in nature as he spoke to all man's needs before sin came into the human heart. Added to this we now have,

Second: God in Jesus Christ as he speaks to all the spiritual needs of sinful man.

Nature and Jesus the Christ are an old and a new testament, containing the complete romance of divine love in creation and in redemption.

The story of Christ had to be written that the world might know the matchless redemptive love of God, and so we venerate and love God's Holy Book, not as a fetich, but as a loving child folds to the heart the letter penned by the dying mother before passing into glory. Yea, more, for we catch from its pages the only message of eternal hope for our own hearts, the sweet words of redemption from sin, and salva-

tion to the immortal life. We exalt that Book as God's second best gift to man, for it tells a sweeter story than the winds speak or the rocks whisper. It is the story of the Messiah—that Messiah, God's gift of Himself for a lost world.

Most wondrously He grew. Too unique and holy was that life for our poor human thought to compass or fathom.

Methinks that as that infant heart enlarged beyond its first feeble responses to motherly affection, there steadily flowed into it a ceaseless stream of divine love. As capacity to will developed, there kept apace the infilling of the divine will. As thoughts multiplied, lo! there gradually showed forth in Him the mind of God.

Thus from infantile and dependent existence resting on the bosom of the blessed Virgin Mother, with all His physical limitations for receiving, but perfect in all his receptions, there steadily expanded a physical capacity for a larger portion of divine life. In never-failing proportions that divine life occupied to the full that expanding tenement of purest clay, until there stood forth before the world the Human and Divine Messiah in all his physical maturity. Thus "He grew in favor with God and man," always in perfect equipoise in His dual nature, but growing to the full stature of a complete physical life.

By this incarnation of divine life there was neither more of God on earth nor less of God in heaven, but "God manifest in the flesh."

The electric bulb is but the form which reveals the light from the electric current pervading the wire. It is the power of electricity made manifest in the bulb;

IN GETHSEMANE.

but when by age and use the bulb falls away the great current moves on in its silent course.

The lamp was but the medium for the revelation of the electric light, as the human form of Jesus the Christ showed forth the true light of the world. In this manner there came to the world a Redeemer—Christ our King. "Through His stripes we are healed."

VICARIOUS SUFFERING!—

a mystery which seems at first insolvable to mortal mind. Innocent love bruised and bleeding at the feet of sin that justice may be satisfied. A selfish soul, calloused to all the mystic influences of sadness and suffering about it, moves in cold and unfeeling courses amidst the despairing and struggling victims in life's moral wreckage. When the divine element of love and tenderness enters such a life, then that blessed but now sad angel—sympathy—causes the heart to yearn for others, the tear to start, and turns the customary hours of sleep into night vigils by the cot of human woe. He who possesses most of holy love in this world suffers most vicariously. It may not be in a Gethsemane, on the side of Olivet, or upon the cruel cross of Calvary, but, oh, how the spear thrust reaches the heart of innocent love! The tenderest hearts are susceptible to the keenest mental agonies. As we move upward in the scale of holy love, ascending step by step, from friend to brother, sister, father, mother, God, the sacrificial suffering of the soul by sorrow for the sins of others is graduated and intensified by the angle of ascent.

Love from its very nature becomes a mediator. He who in childish days with lisping, stammering penitence poured into his mother's ear the story of rebellion against fatherly authority, should recall how that penitence and that chosen mediator, in a mysterious way, known only to love, sweetened, intensified, and illumined the atmosphere of that hour of reconciliation.

But can the suffering of the innocent *atone* for the guilty? Can another one's heart blood, and that the blood of the innocent, *atone* for sin? There is here

A MYSTERY OF DIVINE ALCHEMY.

A little fellow deliberately threw a stone and smashed the window glass. The father upon his return home found the little culprit holding to his slightly older brother, who said, "Papa, Willie did it, but I had some pennies in my bank and I went over with Willie and I paid the lady for it. Please, papa, don't punish Willie." As the two little fellows stood, one shielding by love, the other seeking the protection of love, the innocent having suffered with and for the guilty—what think ye? Was it simply that after the act of sin the act of paying money made amends for the willful deed, or was it that a far higher result was obtained? Was not the love of each for the other intensified by that reciprocity of love, and was not that father greater, grander, nobler, and more faithful to the law of justice in forgiving rather than punishing? To our human thought, the penitence of the one and the vicarious sacrifice of the other made forgiveness

a moral necessity. And so the innocent suffers for the guilty. Vicarious suffering in a world of sin by its reflex influences on the other souls about it, makes the world a brighter, better, and holier place.

Widen this same circle now and take in the whole moral realm. We will find within it sin, atonement in Jesus Christ, and God. Read again the story of the little boys and then see how that from sin, atonement in Jesus Christ, and the forgiveness of God we experience "the joy of the redeemed."

We are now up in the realm of the highest thought. Is there darkness about us? Is there any mist of doubt or uncertainty obscuring our vision? Then let us watch with sincere heart-yearning for that sunrise! It's coming! May we stand together on the highest point of observation raised above the great ocean of time? That mountain top is an exalted life spanned by just thirty-three years and tracked by the earthly footprints of our Lord. Back of us is the rugged range of Old Testament history, while before us the foothills of the New Dispensation stretch away into the dim distance to a sea of universal love, which sweeps about the walls of

THAT CELESTIAL WHITE CITY

whose domes and minarets are just beyond. The sun of prophecy has long since set. It went down first between the twin peaks of lofty Isaiah and rugged Jeremiah. The weird Ezekiel next becomes shrouded, until at last the sun of prophecy is veiled behind the minor prophets, disappearing in the sea of silence. For four

hundred years thereafter no ray of prophetic light found its way through the black and lowering clouds. With four long centuries of undisturbed night behind us, we cast an expectant glance to the eastern horizon. A setting sun throws its rays backward; a rising sun casts its rays forward. The last rays of prophecy were shed here on this mountain where we stand, while the first dawn of sunrise will be witnessed here. In our thinking we are at the corona of glory—our vision sweeps a world. Glorious opportunity! Precious hour this, fated with possibilities of wonderful outlook!

Is it strange to thee that the divine and human should here meet and coalesce in a God-child born of a woman? By the touch of Almighty God at the world's dawn of human life, inanimate nature was energized, vivified, and glorified, while from planetary dust there arose by the divine inbreathing of life, a race of poets, philosophers, and philanthropists—soulful beings endowed with God-like qualities of fatherhood, motherhood, the love of children, and all the sweet virtues of spiritual life.

Marvel of marvels that a little handful of clay, God-touched, should have become divinely formed and endowed with an immortal soul—yea, should have become a child of God!

Is it more of a miracle, then, that He who caused inanimate nature to conceive and bring forth immortal man, should unite with and enter into the life of that sweet and pure virgin of Bethlehem, revealing thereby the fatherhood of God and sanctifying the motherhood of earth?

It is indeed most natural that the supreme thing in the celestial world, the loving heart of a Heavenly Father, should be displayed to our sordid human race through the most supernal of all earth's possessions—motherhood—by immaculate conception. Eden is a greater mystery than Bethlehem.

While we are waiting here for the advancing light to burst in over Bethlehem's hills, let us, between the hours of the immaculate conception and the angel songs of eastern morn, look up into the calm vault of heaven.

The starry world hangs pendent over our heads. World upon world and constellation upon constellation swing in golden-belted highways, swayed by invisible power. No material arm is in sight, yet infinite arm power sweeps the sky. It's there. Somehow—yet there. Our soul's ear catches a voice inaudible and our heart stands almost still as a message comes in. The doors are locked and the windows bolted, and yet a messenger enters in and, standing before conscience, *speaks, speaks,* and conscience answers to it, yet no vibrations disturb the air and no waves of sound break the sacred silence of the soul's temple. While we are waiting keep thine eyes riveted upon the heavens above thee. The blanket of night is spread over the world at thy feet, and thou art throwing thy soul into the expanse above thee, where the invisible forces are evidencing the mightiest intelligence of the universe, as its worlds are swinging pendulums from golden suns held in place by invisible power. From whence? Invisible power and invisible persons are what we are dealing with this day.

ALL POWER IS INVISIBLE.

The flashing light in the wake of the flying meteor which you saw was not the power that launched it forth. The mallet struck the ball—you saw it. The mallet stopped, but the ball sped on. Secret, invisible power lurked within—unseen and invisible—but *there.* But above thee, where thou art looking with me now, no visible physical contact transmits, but power sweeps the abysses and climbs the heights unspoken and unseen, except as to thy soul. There it both speaks and is seen in the white-walled inclosure of thine inner consciousness, where no materialism finds its way and where thou and the Infinite meet.

During the Revolutionary War a spy passed through the British lines, bearing in his pocket a message to Washington. He was arrested, and the letter examined; but there being nothing seen in it but a commonplace letter to a friend, he was released and sped on. When Washington received from his hand the letter he held it up to the light, and there, traced with milk, was a communication of vital importance to the American armies. Will you hold up to the light " God's book of nature " and its sequel, " God's book of inspired revelation," and catch a message for your own heart as you discover the invisible power and the invisible persons lurking therein?

Until recently I thought there were but three persons crucified together that awful night on Calvary: Christ in the center, and a thief on the right and a thief on the left. By putting the Gospel accounts to-

gether, with a study of Paul's epistle, I find that we cannot harmonize the accounts of the Crucifixion, unless we admit that there were *four* crucified together. Christ's cross bore not only himself, but *another.* I follow the narrative, and find that Joseph of Arimathæa's tomb contained Christ and *a companion* from His cross, while on the golden morning of the Resurrection, when the flashing angelic swords cleft the seal and cut the bands, Christ and *a companion* came forth together to that Resurrection. Noting the phraseology, I sweep back in eager thought to the scene of Christ's baptism, and there too the Word admits of another being baptized with *Him.* Let us, with the most solemn thought toward God, press the inquiry, Who was that other one?

BELIEVER, THOU ART THE ONE!

"With Christ in baptism" (Col. ii. 12); "Crucified with Christ" (Gal. ii. 20.); "Dead with Christ" (Col. ii. 20); "Risen with Him" (Col. ii. 12); "Companions with Him forevermore" (Matt. xxviii. 20).

Believer, how do you honor or dishonor that companionship? Oh, servant of God, dost thou only dream of this, or hast thou gotten the thought of divine companionship woven into the very warp and woof of thy nature, so that thou art weaving the design of thy life like unto the life of Jesus the Christ of God?

While we have been waiting and talking together the light has burst over Judah's hills.

"There's a mother's deep prayer,
And a baby's low cry!

And the Star rains its fire while the beautiful sing,
For the Manger of Bethlehem cradles a King."

The angelic chorus has startled the morning stillness; the wise men have bowed at the manger's side, and the temple has received the youth. His fame has gone out through all the land. Sickness has fled before Him, while death itself has for the first time felt the irresistible power of a revealed Christ who came to lift the weight of human sorrows.

Enthusiastic crowds meanwhile pressed Him on all sides, until, transformed into a raging mob, they showed Him to us crucified, dead, buried. Then came the dashing charge of the angels to the sepulcher, the very flash of whose glances paralyzed the Roman guards. Then followed the reassertion of life. We now in this panorama behold the glory-crowned Mount of Ascension, and "He is received out of their sight."

A forsaken world visited and a visited world forsaken! Is that your creed? If so, stand with us as the advancing day permits us to discern the succeeding acts of the Apostles, in which the Invisible is brought to our sight with such strange power and overwhelming influence.

The revelation opens up with the statement that what has passed in such rapidity before our vision between Bethlehem and the Ascension was but the *beginning* of Christ's work. From Bethlehem to the Ascension marked but the beginning of Christ's marvelous redemptive work.

Listen to the record (Acts i. 1): Luke says "The former treatise have I written unto you, O Theophilus,

of all that Jesus *began* both to do and to teach." The gospels are but the history of the inauguration of Christ's work and words. "Began both to do and to teach." Either He has abandoned His work, or He is yet doing it. "Lo, I am with you all the days" was the statement. How can that harmonize with His actual absence? Ah! Note ye: "*a cloud* received Him out of their sight." He became invisible! As He appeared "in the upper room" and was invisible between the door and the middle of the room, so He vanished from their sight, but remained our ever-present Lord. No more physical, earthly presence to divide or limit the soul thought. Mary, the sister of the entombed Lazarus, said, "Lord, if thou hadst been here, our brother had not died." Was not our Lord there? Being physically out in the desert, He was not thought of as being in Bethany. He was hedged in to the thought of His most loving followers, the

WOMEN OF BETHANY,

because of His physical environment. Freed from those earthly conceptions and His embodiment, He is lifted up in our thought to the eternal throne of God and becomes to us our always-present Lord and Saviour.

It was a strange message that Christ delivered to His disciples just before He left, and which, while one of the most sublime and important of all His utterances, is one of the least comprehended by the Church. He stated the necessity of His becoming invisible that He might give unto His followers the ministration of the Holy Spirit. The doctrine laid down is that compan-

ionship with Christ is not enough. Note carefully the petitions of His disciples and their reliance all centered in the visible Christ. No prayer is recorded before the Ascension in which the disciples prayed to the Father or to the Holy Spirit. Yet Christ prayed continually. Therefore it became a necessity that He should go into the invisible realm so that the Holy Spirit should reveal unto them the Fatherhood of God, the Omnipresent Christ, and the universal ministrations of the Holy Ghost.

Bethlehem was a necessity to reach the world. *Calvary* was a necessity to redeem the world. *Pentecost* was a necessity to sanctify the world.

When our Lord had departed, there were two things that His disciples knew that they must do:

First: Model their lives after His.

Second: Witness for Him.

But our Blessed Master had practically said: "I am going away, and will leave you unfitted to witness for me. You know all about my miraculous coming. You know all about my ministry. You were with me in Gethsemane and at Calvary. You stood by at the Resurrection. You companioned with me during many days of happy reunion after death, and thou art to see me caught up into the invisible realm beyond thee, while heavenly heralds are to bid thee speed on. I know your hearts are eager to tell the story, while Calvary stands as a monument to the intensity of my desire to win a lost world. But," He said, "wait, wait, wait!"

Those disciples had *knowledge, experience,* and *willing hearts.* "Not enough," says our Lord, "to carry

the priceless message to a lost world." Not enough! There is a force, a power, a *personality* that must come into thy life before thou art prepared. Thus does Christ magnify the Holy Spirit, invisible to our sight, but present at our side, waiting to take possession of our hearts.

While wise men bow at Bethlehem let wise men also bow at Pentecost. While the frankincense and myrrh sweeten the air in that City of David, the birthplace of the Messiah, let the offerings of love and adoration be likewise poured out at Pentecost, the birthplace of the Holy Ghost. Oh, thou blessed Comforter, be Thou our Guide forevermore!

Oh, brethren, do you know Christ? So did the *unprepared* disciples. Have you experience in walking in His footsteps? So had the *unprepared* disciples. Have you a willing heart for testimony? So had the *unprepared* disciples. Do you say, "What lack I yet?" Do you not lack what the Church of Christ so greatly needs to-day—a special baptism of the Holy Spirit? Are you being guided in all your thoughts and speech by the Holy Spirit, or are you like the professed disciples just before Pentecost (casting lots for a successor to Judas), having your course steered by chance or uncertain events? I call your close and prayerful attention to the Apostles as we watch them from our vantage-point of observation. The command of our Lord to His disciples to wait until the Holy Spirit should be given to them was met by their gathering together and spending ten days in prayer for such a baptism and a personal revelation of a personal comforter. Think of it for a moment. That com-

mand meant, Do not take a step; do not speak a word; do not undertake in any way to make a move to carry into effect the great commission unless under the personal influence of the Holy Spirit. Now let us watch the effect, as with

MIGHTY, MAJESTIC STEP

the Holy Spirit, receiving the intense petitions of the disciples, crowns Pentecost with His sublime presence. Oh, what tremendous obligations crowd in upon us to *God the Father,* who from the wealth of His infinite love sent His Son into the world. Oh, what tremendous obligations crowd in upon us to *God the Son,* who gave Himself a sacrifice for a lost world! Oh, what tremendous obligations crowd in upon us to *God the Holy Spirit*—He who brooded over the world at the Creation; He who gave the torch of light to the Old Testament prophets, enabling them to foreshadow the Messiah to come! It was the Holy Spirit who brought the man Christ into being, descended upon Him in the form of a dove at baptism, and was with Him in the desert. It was of the Holy Spirit that our blessed Lord loved to talk in His last conversations with His disciples before the Crucifixion. It was the Holy Spirit of whom He made that glorious prophecy that portends so much to you and me—that He should descend upon His disciples in all time and fill them with Himself. Then follows that resplendent galaxy of flashing promises that reveals to us the blessed mission of the Holy Spirit who was to descend as "that other Comforter."

He shall lead the disciples into all truth.

Do you want to be guided and led into a full knowledge of the divine love? Do you want to know your Saviour as you have never known Him before? Do you want His Word to blaze forth with new light and ring with sweeter words of comfort and joy? Then pray for the Holy Spirit, and cease not that prayer until the answer comes.

He shall be the guide and companion of the Church.

Dost thou want that Holy Spirit to companion with thy soul? to lead thee into labors of love, lighten thy days with His sweet converse, and keep thee close to the Father-heart of God? Then pray for the Holy Spirit, and cease not that prayer until the answer comes.

He shall make us like unto Christ.

Do you want the same mind in you that was in Christ Jesus our Lord? Do you want fitness for service? Do you want to have power from on high? Then pray for the Holy Spirit, and cease not that prayer until the answer comes.

Then to that Holy Spirit, to whom we owe our salvation, our knowledge of Christ, our promptings to a better life, and from whom we receive the blessed guidance and help of His daily companionship, be glory and honor for ever and ever!

Shall we open up our hearts now—even now—to the reception of the Holy Spirit? "Be ye filled with the Holy Ghost." Oh, that we workers could be brought by the Blessed Spirit close to the heart of the Man of Sorrows! Then we would easily find our way to the heart of sorrowing humanity. The secret of the early Church was that it was

First: Full of Faith.

Second: Full of the Holy Ghost.

How did the Holy Spirit descend upon the early disciples?

First: As a sound of rushing wind (but there was no wind). Manifest power!

Second: Cloven, fiery tongues. Witness power—power to witness.

"Ye are my witnesses." But note the statement, "After the Holy Ghost is come upon you, ye shall be witnesses unto me." After—after—"after the Holy Ghost is come upon you." Dare you teach a Sunday-school class without being filled with the Holy Ghost? Dare you live? Dare you live without the intense assurance that He is abiding in thy soul? How sweet the atmosphere of thy secret life will be with such a guest! The Holy Spirit is always spoken of in God's Book in terms of gentleness, love, and tenderness. We read of the wrath of God the Father, the wrath of God the Son, the judgment and the tribunals of the Father and the Son; but the Holy Spirit is always spoken of as tenderness and love.

Oh, that He might enter into full possession of our souls, to guide our ambition, illuminate our thought, and, taking complete possession of our minds, make our lives conform to His whole nature!

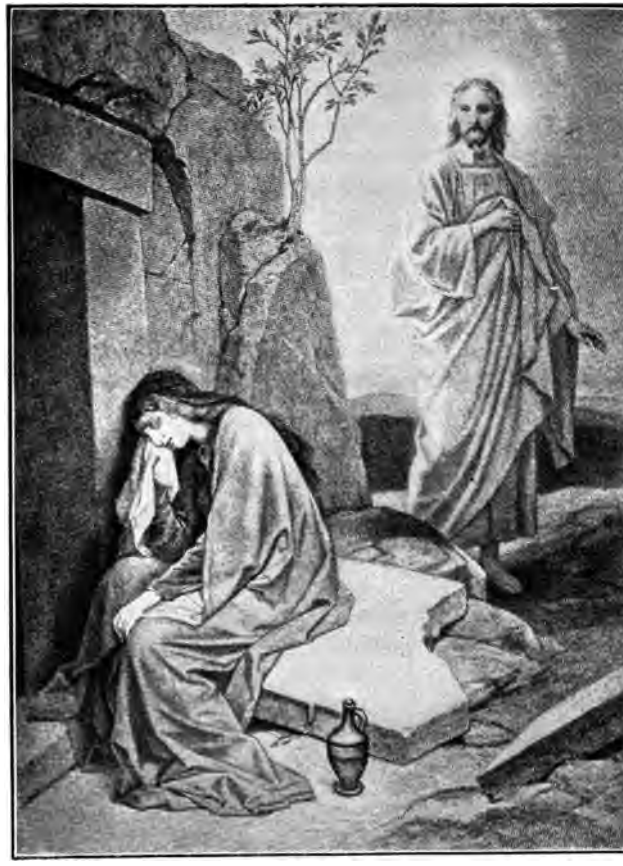
Now lift thy thought to the very throne of God!

Jesus was a man. Within Him was God, and He became the Christ of a world.

You are a man. The promise is that within you God the Holy Ghost may dwell, and then thou wilt become a Christ in thine influence. "As thou hast

sent me into the world, even so, even so, send I them into the world." Marvelous possibilities, stupendous privileges. Shall we not seek above all other things to be filled with the Holy Spirit, and so companion with Him for the Christ's sake? Amen.

"I would not have you ignorant, brethren, of them who are asleep."



THE FIRST EASTER MORN.

OUR VANISHED LOVED ONES.

"I am He that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive forevermore, amen; and have the keys of death and of the realm of the departed spirits."—*Rev.* i. 18.

ONCE in boyhood days, when fever laid its hand upon me, I tossed with blinded eyes and delirious brain, fearing every imaginable evil, when out of the blackness about me I heard a voice that dispelled all the discordant cries which were rending my disordered brain. I felt a throbbing which I knew meant that I, a little boy, was held and kept on mother's bosom and was being spoken to by mother's love. An ineffable light illumined my soul, and I was at rest.

Later on I followed her down to where two worlds met, and kneeling at that bedside I saw the marvelous radiance from a redeemed spirit already plumed for its heavenly flight. Then I saw her pass beyond the range of my natural vision, but she did not hurry. She for some little time rested there in the Valley of Shadows and sweetly talked with me. She told me that she knew the shadows were there, but they were only there to us who remained behind. "All is light to me," she added, "all is light; Jesus is here." I was behind her, as it were. The golden light of the Celestial One she saw beyond her, left for me the shadow of my earthly loss. Her vision was clear. Two worlds for her were billowed in light. As I brushed away the blinding tears, behold, I saw no more, for

SHE HAD BECOME INVISIBLE.

Somehow my mind has not been satisfied with the statement that we are separated. Only one change has come over me—I cannot see her with these now failing natural eyes; that is all. I never did see her, anyway. I daily saw her face, which carried an outward expression of a wonderful spiritual life within, but I never saw that life. I had heard her expressions of love for her boy, and had felt its manifestations, but I never saw that divine flame. So when her voice failed and her face took on its last beatific expressions, love lived on with me, and I know that love lived on with her; the reflecting medium had simply given out, or had it been changed for another? Were those loves separated? Would God separate them?

I have been ever since watching the opening into that mystic realm called death. Other of my dear ones have meanwhile vanished therein, and there has gradually come to me a new and strange impression, a deep calm and a blessed companioning, until the longing of my soul is now not to go, but only to see, for seeing is going and going is seeing—one is but a synonym of the other. The term "departed spirit" is a misnomer, if I read aright the Word of God. In wandering along the portals constantly swinging open into that realm, I came to an old passageway. It was where Jacob went through, and the statement is made on indisputable authority that he was "gathered to his people." A strange expression prevalent among nomadic tribes, the memory of whose sepulchered dead

haloed their resting-places along the line of wandering, as in *solitary* graves they kept death's vigils.

How blessed to our thought that this wondrous Book of God opens so early with the statement that in passing over we go to our loved ones! Yea, even before Jacob's invisibility God had hung out a light over the entry into the eternal world by telling Abraham in a wondrous revelation that when he should be called hence he would go to his fathers who had gone before. And so there comes that assurance of reunion with our loved ones, as old as the Word of God itself. This answers to the heart-yearning so strong in all of God's children. It responds to our desire for the unity of loves in the realms of light.

Somehow with anxious forebodings we ponder the thought, "Will our loved ones who have entered into the larger life be to us, when we join them, what they were to us when we companioned together with them in this lesser life?" What means that strange utterance of the inspired writer, "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, we shall be changed"? Will earthly ties vanish? Does the statement that there "They neither marry nor are given in marriage" sound the death knell to that bond, sanctified by love's joys and sorrows? Can it be that the sweetest ties born of life's companionships are "changed" or destroyed as we pass through that strange ordeal so mistakenly called death?

Let us bear in mind that the better life is a spiritual existence. The physical, sensual, and materialistic natures that we now have will there be transformed into glorified bodies which will thrill only with the highest

and holiest spiritual emotions. Sensual joys will be forever succeeded by spiritual delights.

We all appreciate the fact that there are blood relationships here, where no "kinship of spirit" exists. On the contrary, we ofttimes witness in this world evidences of a spiritual brotherhood where there beats but the physical pulsations of a common humanity.

When our Divine Master said, "He that doeth the will of my father which is in heaven, the same is my mother, my sister, and my brother," He let us somewhat into the secret of the relationships which shall exist when we shall be "at home with the Lord."

Let us gather up in thought all that there is in the heart of motherhood, in sisterly love and brotherly affection, and blending it together as we conceive it exists in our Heavenly Father's home, we will have but a faint conception of the love ties, or spiritual relationships, between the redeemed spirit and our blessed Lord. If, then, all who enter into that larger life are to experience such a marvelous enrichment of the soul's affections, will not the element of character which we so adore in our loved ones here be infinitely beautified, to the intensifying of our affections toward them there?

Will not our own infilling from the Divine Nature make its irresistible appeal to the hearts of those who with a new heavenly vision will see our likeness to Jesus Christ?

When our loved ones shall sit with us at the feet of Jesus in the celestial realm, with all human frailties gone and all hearts filled to overflowing with the holiest emotions, will not love flow at high tide?

But are they far hence? The babe lifted by angelic beings from its mother's bosom, but also from a world's terrible moral hazards—

IS IT FAR OFF?

The loved wife on whom someone leaned in that sweetest of life's joys—wifely love—is she far hence? It is not a day's journey! This is certain, for He who lifted the penitent one from the cruel cross to celestial joys said to him, "This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise," and so within the compass of but a few hours our thought should look with that confident hope that we shall find within it our spiritual ones, and in the finding shall have new joys by companioning with them in the Divine Presence.

One joyful thought entering into this inquiry is that time and distance are unknown and non-existent in the other life. A thousand years to them are "but as yesterday." Not as to-day with its wearisome cares, but as yesterday with its vague recollections, or as a single "watch in the night." The whole period of human existence on this planet is less than the dim memories of an earthly day's span to the glorified spirits amidst the beatific joys of eternity. "No more time!" Wherever our loved ones are, the assurance comes to us that in point of time they cannot be far away, for time is eliminated from the heavenly life. For our hungry hearts, wearied with the lonely vigils here, this truth, while comforting, does not entirely fill the void that seems to exist between us and our invisible ones. It might not take them long to come to us, but do they come and are they very near?

Oh, for an answer whereby our turbulent thoughts might safely rest in conscious companionship with them here, as we shall some day in more clearness of vision companion with them there!

One thing is sure: the angels are constantly ministering to all His loved ones in this world of ours. "Are they not *all* ministering spirits sent forth to minister unto them who are heirs of salvation?" All down through the ages, kings, prophets, apostles, and martyrs, with the blessed Christ, have borne testimony to these sweet messengers of comfort. There can be no mistake but that there is a clear revelation contained in the Word of God that most of heaven is here with us. God's universality is left nowhere in doubt. Our blessed Lord said, "Lo, I am with you always," and the Holy Spirit's constant abiding among us and in us is clearly affirmed with such supreme delight to the heart of every true child of God. How the soul should fill with joy over the divine goodness in revealing the fact that *all* the angels are sent forth to minister to Christ's followers in this earthly conflict! There can be no question, then, that all the celestial powers, from the Most High God to the humblest angel of light,

ARE ACTIVELY ENLISTED

in a world's redemption, and are with us in the conflict. Why should we, then, for a single moment suppose that our own loved ones are the only exiles from this most sweet and joyous service to Him who gave Himself for us? With our present conceptions of God such would not seem possible. Let us, however, move

along the line of the Christ revelation, and new gleams of light will flash in upon us with heavenly radiance.

Jesus the Christ taught His disciples by special revelations when He desired them to know more fully some deep truth.

When in the darkness of the prison's gloom John the Baptist felt the black shadow of doubt in his soul, he sent to Jesus and asked Him if He was really the One that was to come, or must he look for another. Jesus replied by simply letting John's disciples *look* into His miraculous work.

When the disciples needed to be taught of His great love for the sinner, He let them *witness* the climax to the scene at Samaria's well.

As the lesson of humility was needed, they *beheld,* and lo! He washed their feet.

So as He desired to let them and us further into the secret of the eternal world, He took Peter, James, and John with Him into the mountain for a soul *vision.*

It was no new thing for Him to go into the mountain apart. All day He walked and talked with those of this world, and then as "every man went unto his own house Jesus went into the Mount of Olives" or elsewhere and companioned with the Invisible. The record is very plain that spiritual communings were His sometimes for a whole night. So He took the three disciples up into the mountain with Him, and they fell asleep. When they awoke He permitted them to *see* who were with Him, and there in calm, sweet, heavenly converse sat Jesus, Moses, and Elijah. They were talking about earthly events that were to occur in the life work of our Lord. Just as angels had been

found to be with Him elsewhere, so here in the divine counsels, and seen by special permission, were these earthly redeemed ones. Conversant they seemed to be with the affairs of the earthly kingdom. Strange, was it not, that the disciples being permitted to use their spiritual vision knew who Christ's two companions were? Simply by a change in their power of sight they also beheld a new Christ, for He was transfigured before them. Ah, could we but see with that peculiar sight from which our eyes are now holden, whom might we not see? The disciples

SIMPLY HAD A FOREGLEAM

of that hour when they should know even as they were then known. These heavenly ones were present with the disciples while they stupidly slept, and were apparent only to them when God for a moment opened their vision a little wider. It should be remembered that there were three witnesses who beheld this glorious scene.

One fact is clear: Wherever Jesus is, there are our saved, vanished, and loved ones. When we depart we shall be with Christ, which is far better (Phil. i. 23), so that when we are absent from the body we are present with the Lord (2 Cor. v. 8).

Another fact is clear: If we are His disciples, then wherever we are, there Jesus is.

Our blessed Lord on the Mount companioned on His earthly side with Peter, James, and John, and on His heavenly side was companioning with Moses and Elijah; so that side by side in the holy company of our Lord these of heaven and earth sat together—to the

disciples for a time unconsciously, but they were there together, nevertheless.

With this wonderful picture before us, we have an illustration given to us by our loving Master that the redeemed in heaven and the redeemed on earth *companion* together in that most blessed of all associations —*Unity in Christ.* If that unity is perfect, no space can divide and no time can separate us from each other. Oh, how we should seek to keep in that most holy bond! Separation from our loved, invisible ones can only occur when they or we are exiled from Christ. If so near, may we not speak to these dear ones, and why can we not receive just one message from them? Why should we desire to commune one with the other? Perfect faith in the word of God should satisfy this craving of our souls.

Fellow-disciples, is it possible that we so doubt our Lord's statement that in order to believe Him we must, Thomas-like, see with the mortal eye and hear with the fleshly ear? Lo! He speaketh to the heart of man, and only to the eye of faith does the celestial vista now open to the soul of man ere he is permitted to wing his flight through realms of eternal joy. Somehow I feel that

MESSAGES ARE PASSING

constantly from one to the other, but there is failure here to understand the heavenly voices, coming as they do in the language of heaven. Our limited knowledge of the spiritual world narrows the possibilities down, and yet some few things we do know. In this world

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of ours words are but the evidences of mental action. It is the thought we are after. So as we ponder the problem, it seems very clear that God through His infinite love gives us the key to the soul desires for us of our invisible loved ones and transmits to us the revelation of their heart-throbs in our behalf.

Son, is thy mother with Christ in the better realm? You know then, under the divine light of God's Word, what her message to your soul is. Could it be other than Christ's invitation to you?

Husband, has the wife of thy love passed into that realm so near, so beautiful, and so holy? Listen to the voice speaking in thy soul. Does it not interpret her message. Yes?

Oh, mother, wife, daughter, sister, thy loved one is with Jesus, and Christ is either in your heart or at the door of your heart, and your loved one is there with Him. Stop and listen! Away back in the secret chamber of your soul His voice speaks. Listen! Would your loved one send any other message than that? In the awful extremity of a world's need, all heaven can have but one message for each of us, while the world can have but one answer which it could feel was fitted to it.

Heaven's united message is, Follow Jesus. The answering message should be the gift of self to God. Then that bond of blessed companionship is completed, and we in our very deepest natures will enjoy that most holy relation, simply waiting for that bright and golden moment when the veil shall be riven, the vision expanded, the weary body divested, and we move, not out to, but into that realm where we shall be gathered

to our people. Happy moment—oh, longed-for hour! Feeling the sweetness of their blessed presence with us now, but then seeing the celestial light of their spirits divine. Now knowing something, but so weakly, of the divine companionship, but then knowing as we are known.

A VISION BY THE SEA.

I PITCHED my tent one summer night on a point of land extending far out into the sea. As darkness settled down upon me the storm-clouds that had been gathering all that day came rolling in upon the land. The wild winds swept sea, hill, and vale, while great angry waves dashed themselves in fury on the shore.

IT WAS AN APPALLING STORM!

As I peered out of my tent into the blackness of the night I saw a great lighthouse lifting its golden beacon far into the clouds. All night long the storm raged. All night long that flaming signal was exalted far into the clouds!

But soon the morning dawned. That wild, tumultuous sea had now become an imperial highway of royal purple, flecked by golden flashlights sparkling in the pathway of the sun. Flocks fed in the valleys and along peaceful streams, while the flowers of the fields lifted their heads, still glistening with the tear-drops of the night, that they might be kissed by the lips of the rising sun.

A great fleet of vessels was moored under the shelter of yonder reef, having found its way into port by following the light through the stream. Their anchors were cast, their sails were furled, the waves had ceased from troubling and the sailors were at rest.

MONTAUK LIGHT-HOUSE.

No need of the lighthouse now, for the sun had become the light thereof, and the waves had ceased their troubling and the sailors were at rest!

Oh, Beulah Land, sweet Beulah Land! Oh, Paradise, sweet Paradise! Oh, Golden City, sweet Golden City! May we hold aloft the glorious light of the Gospel of Jesus Christ above the raging seas of time; that the storm-tossed mariners may find their way by its rays into the port of peace, where "the Lamb is the light thereof" and "the wicked shall cease from troubling and the weary shall be at rest!"

Oh, Golden Day! Speed thou thy glorious coming!